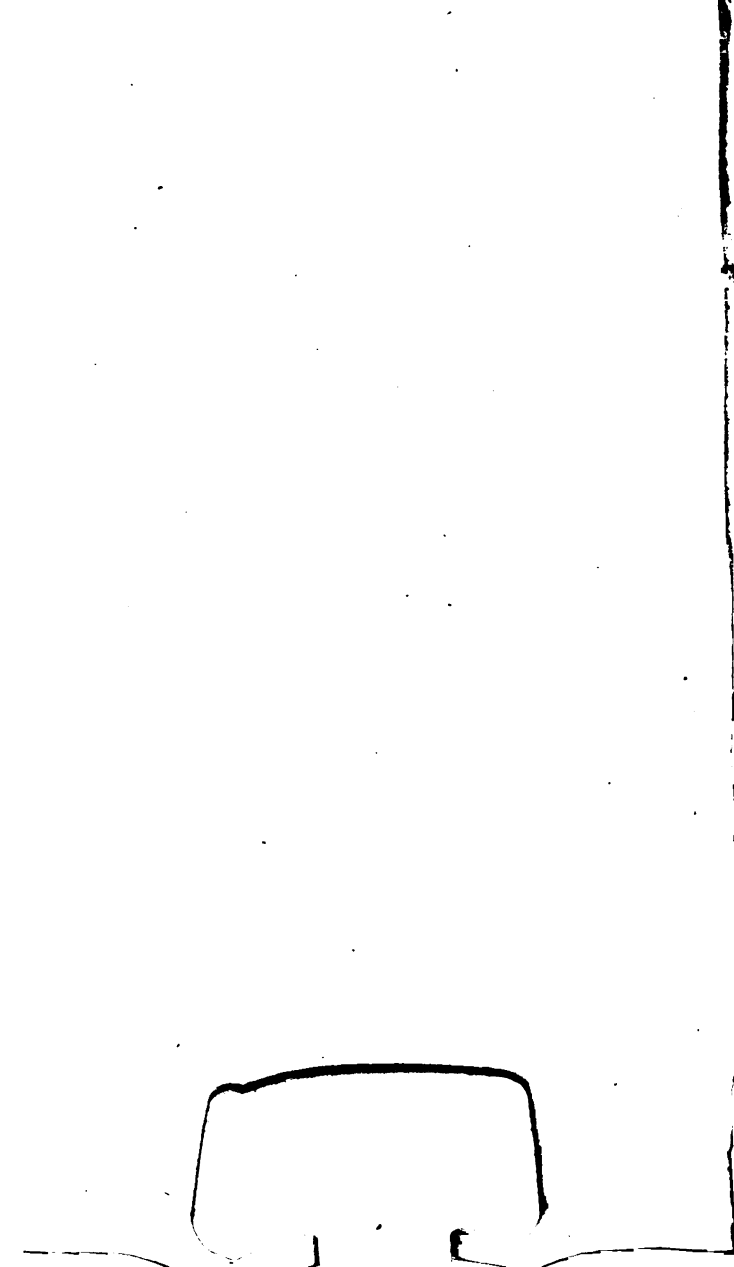
THE

THEATRE

OF

EDUCATION.



THE

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EDUCATION.

THE THEATRE OF EDUCATION.

A NEW TRANSLATION FROM THE FRENCH OF MADAME LA MARQUISE DE SILLERY, LATE MADAME LA COMTESSE DE GENLIS.

VOL. I.

Leçon commence, exemple achève.
La Motte, Fable de l'Aigle et de l'Aiglon.

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M DCC LXXXVII.

TO

MADAME LA MARQUISE DE SILLERY.

PERMIT us, MADAM, thus publickly to return our moſt thankful acknowledgements for the honour you confer upon us, by allowing the following TRANSLATION to be inſcribed to your name; an honour which demands our gratitude in an eſpecial manner, as we do not enjoy the happineſs of your perſonal acquaintance.

WE have no claim to your patronage, MADAM, except an earneſt deſire of doing

all the juſtice in our power to a Work which riſes as much ſuperiour to our praiſe, as we have found it beyond our imitation.

BUT your candour and diſcernment, MADAM, will no doubt ſuggeſt to you how hard it is to transfuſe the ſpirit of one language into another; and your knowledge of the Engliſh tongue will but too fully convince you of the particular difficulty of rendering French *dialogue* into our language.

HOWEVER, it is ſaid by an elegant Writer, that the Artiſt who copies from a RAPHAEL, or a TITIAN, muſt daub indeed, if he makes a diſagreeable picture; and, encouraged by this thought, we preſume to hope, that we have preſerved ſuch a likeneſs, MADAM, of your excellent Performance, as may render our Copy not unpleaſing, though it fail to exhibit thoſe nice touches which ſo eminently diſtinguiſh the Original.

BUT, whatever reception our labours may meet with, we muſt always derive the higheſt gratification

gratification from being permitted to dedicate them to you; and we shall ever remain, with the greatest respect,

MADAM,

Your very sincere Admirers,

and your much obliged,

and most obedient, humble Servants,

THE TRANSLATORS.

ADVERTISEMENT

BY THE

TRANSLATORS.

THE fame acquired by MADAME DE GENLIS is ſo deſervedly great, and the THEATRE D'EDUCATION ſo univerſally conſidered as her *chef-d'œuvre*, that it naturally becomes the ſtudy and admiration of her Sex; ſome of whom, in order

der to amuſe their minds, and at the ſame time amend their hearts, by imprinting on the memory ſuch exalted precepts as thoſe contained in the THEATRE D'EDUCATION, undertook to tranſlate it into Engliſh, and have now, to the beſt of their abilities, finiſhed this Work, which they preſume to place before the eyes of an indulgent Publick.

LET it not be inferred from the Title given to theſe Dramas, that they are calculated merely for the uſe of Children—quite otherwiſe;—ſince by far the greater part of them ſeem profeſſedly addreſſed to perſons juſt entering into life, or to thoſe who have long been engaged in it's concerns: indeed, people of all ages and of all ranks may derive from the Original of MADAME DE GENLIS, the moſt uſeful and perſuaſive leſſons, couched in the moſt eloquent and charac-

teriſtick language; and however unable the TRANSLATORS may have been to repreſent the beauties of her ſtyle, yet the noble precepts, the animating examples, diſplayed in this excellent Work, are all faithfully preſerved, and will, it is hoped, prove as uſeful in Engliſh as they are in French.

THE

THE

EDITOR'S PREFACE

TO THE FIRST VOLUME.

THE Author of this little Theatre muſt be allowed the merit of having invented a ſpecies of dramatick compoſition hitherto unknown; this kind of writing may undoubtedly be improved; but who would refuſe indulgence to a firſt attempt?

GREAT difficulties were to be ſurmounted in order to make intereſting Dramas

mas without the assistance of intrigue, violent passions, or the contrasted characters of vice and virtue; especially as the Author had positively resolved neither to introduce men, nor to write one sentence which, in tendency or direct terms, should not be a precept.

THESE Dramas are mere Treatises of morality put into action, and it is hoped the Young may find them not devoid of interesting and persuasive lessons: besides, from learning by heart, and representing these Plays, many advantages will result; excellent principles will be graven on the minds of the Performers, their memory will be exercised, their pronunciation formed, and they will acquire grace and a pleasing deportment.

LEARNING by heart detached pieces of prose and verse would not produce the same effects, for it is impossible to declaim alone in a room with as much emulation as when personating a character upon the stage.

THERE

THERE are few Dramas extant which young People can repreſent without danger, and moſt of thoſe few are above their comprehenſion.

THE Author has been particularly careful, throughout theſe little Plays, not to introduce one truly odious character; growing errours only are painted, ſuch as are yet accompanied with a good heart, and conſequently, ſuch as admit of correction.

THERE is no character, except that of *Dorina* in *The Spoiled Child*, which is really wicked; but it was thought right to warn young People againſt the venal flattery they may ſometimes meet with in the Domeſticks who ſurround them; and for this cauſe alone *Dorina* is painted in colours ſo odious to behold, ſo diſagreeable to repreſent.

IN a word, theſe Eſſays, the lucubrations of an Author who has conſecrated both youth and life to this kind of ſtudy, have been dictated by the moſt laudable motives: and

may

may all the Young, who read theſe Dramas, be ſtruck by the examples they contain! may they, in conſequence, become more worthy, more ſuſceptible, more ingenuous, more affectionate to their Parents, and then all the Author's wiſhes will be gratified!

ERRATA.

Vol. I.

Page 16 l. 1 *for* ventuers, *read* ventures.
—— 33 l. 13 — diſerved, *read* deſerved.
—— 33 l. 28 — ſubjct, *read* ſubject.
—— 62 l. 15 — depriciates *read* depreciates.
—— 62 l. 22 — afliſts, *read* afflicts.
—— 71 l. 27 — coaliſe, *read* coaleſce.
—— 77 l. 23 *add* SCENE III.
—— 97 l. 10 *for* conſtanly, *read* conſtantly.
—— 103 l. 9 — Madam, *read* Madame.
—— 103 l. 13 — Madam, *read* Madame.
—— 111 l. 32 — diſpondency, *read* deſpondency.
—— 112 l. 26 — luſture, *read* luſtre.
—— 151 l. 9 — thing, *read* things.
—— 155 l. 18 — creepng, *read* creeping.
—— 179 l. 12 — we, *read* me.
—— 188 l. 32 — groop, *read* group.
—— 197 l. 18 — *Dor. read Jul.*
—— 201 l. 25 — Baronneſs, *read* Baroneſs.
—— 208 *Note* † *line* 1, *after* "A *pouff* is," *add* a.
—— 215 l. 32 *for* virture, *read* virtue.
—— 231 l. 8 — elogium, *read* eulogium.
—— 233 l. 16 — triſling, *read* trifling.
—— 239 l. 14 — exravagant, *read* extravagant.
—— 247 l. 29 — inexcuſable, *read* excuſable.
—— 254 l. 9 — poſſitively, *read* poſitively.

HAGAR IN THE DESERT;

A DRAMA,

OF ONE ACT.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

HAGAR.

ISHMAEL, *Hagar's son.*

AN ANGEL.

The Scene, a Desert.

HAGAR IN THE DESERT.

D'ogni colpa, la colpa maggiore è l'eccesso d'un empio timore oltraggioso all'eterna pieta. *Bétulie de Métastase.*

Of all offences, the greatest is the excess of an impious fear, injurious to eternal mercy.

SCENE the First.

HAGAR, ISHMAEL.

Hagar, *holding her Son by the hand, and carrying a Pitcher.*

WHAT a dismal place! what a frightful solitude!

Ish. Let us return to my father's; we were there so happy!

Hag. Alas! my child, * hatred and jealousy have driven us from thence; and that for ever.

* It may not be improper to observe, that the account which *Madame de Genlis*, naturally enough, puts into the mouth of Hagar, concerning Sarah's dislike to herself and her son, is very different from that recorded in Scripture. Genesis, Chap. XVI. ver. 4. and Chap. XXI. ver. 9.—12. T.

Ish. Hatred! what have I done to deserve it? and you, mother, how can they hate you?

Hag. Envy, my son, causes injustice and cruelty: it leads to hatred, the most odious, the blackest of all the passions.

Ish. Then a feeling heart will never experience it?

Hag. A feeling heart may mistake.—Pride, my son, may corrupt the tenderest mind, and deliver it up to all the fury of revenge.

Ish. Ah, mother! if I have pride, use every means to reclaim me.

Hag. Reason alone ought to guard us from it. The Author of Nature has made nothing but what is good; to him we owe all our virtues, and our vices are our own work.

Ish. Then we are born without pride?

Hag. God impressed on our hearts a salutary desire, which prompts us to distinguish ourselves, to seek for glory.

Ish. This is self-love?

Hag. Yes, my son, and this divine principle, forms heroes, and great men; then, it is pure, and such as God has given it to us: but depraved man abuses this precious gift, he renders it unnatural, base, and turns it towards vain and frivolous objects; at length he converts it into pride.

Ish. Mother, God is good; when we follow his law, he will love us.

Hag. He is then, our father.

Ish. If so, why do you sigh? why are we without resource, without assistance in this desert?

Hag. He watches over us, and only wants to try us.

Ish. Yet in the mean time, we are overwhelmed by

by fatigue and ſorrow; deprived of an aſylum, and of food; how can we reſiſt ſo many evils?

Hag. By courage, which deſpiſes them; by reſignation, which ſubmits to them without a murmur. To ſuffer, is the lot of life; a ſeaſon of trial and vexation, a ſeaſon rapid and ſhort! which, to the virtuous, is ſucceeded by immortality, glory, and happineſs. Let us then ceaſe to complain. Let us conſider the felicity which awaits us, and try to render ourſelves worthy of it.

Iſh. What, you do not fear death, mother?

Hag. Alas! I only fear ſurviving you.

Iſh. Death is nothing!—it is momentary! but to ſuffer, to endure hunger and thirſt, oh, mother!—

Hag. My child, there is ſtill a more dreadful torment—that of being unable to relieve thoſe we love.

Iſh. Have I not felt it?——I have ſeen you weep.

Hag. Ah, my child! if I could, by reſigning my own life, ſave yours!

Iſh. Mother, what good would life do me, without you?

Hag. Oh, my dear Iſhmael!—Cruel Sarah, if you heard him!—if you ſaw him!—yes, your cruel heart would be ſoftened by it.——And I, what muſt I feel?——Ah, my ſon! let us not ſuffer ourſelves to be overwhelmed with ſorrow: our lot is dreadful; but God protects us, and can alter it.

Iſh. This deſert, indeed, produces wild fruits which may nouriſh us; but under ſo ſcorching a ſun, I am conſumed with thirſt, and we find neither fountains, nor ſtreams.

Hag. Perhaps, we may diſcover ſome.—Be-

ſides, in this pitcher, the only comfort left us, there ſtill remains water; it is for you, it is the laſt reſource my tenderneſs reſerves for you.

Iſh. We will ſhare it.

Hag. I can only prolong my own life, by preſerving yours.

Iſh. Mother!

Hag. What, my child?

Iſh. I have not ſlept theſe two days; I feel tired; let us ſit down.

Hag. Then reſt yourſelf, it will reſtore your ſtrength; come and lie down under the ſhade of this buſh. (*Iſhmael follows her, and lies down; ſhe ſtands near him, and puts her pitcher at her feet.*)

Iſh. Mother, do you alſo endeavour to ſleep.

Hag. No, I ſhall watch you.

Iſh. You will not go far from me while I ſleep?

Hag. Ah! can I leave you a moment? his eyes are cloſed—happy age! (*Iſh. falls faſt aſleep.*) Sleep on, ſleep on; you no longer feel your misfortunes, and mine are ſoftened. (*She looks at him.*) Alas! how his features are altered! They bear the ſtamp of ſuffering.—Oh, my ſon! were it not for you, were it not for your complaints which rend my heart, with what courage could I ſupport my deſtiny!—but to hear him lament!—to ſee him weep, good Heaven! it is a torment I cannot endure—he exhauſts all my firmneſs. How he ſleeps!—Poor child!—(*ſhe embraces him.*) How I love you! (*ſhe lays her hand on his forehead.*) His face is burning, the ſun ſmites his head. Alas! even when ſleeping, he is doomed to ſuffer!—but could not I, with my veil faſtened to this branch, form him a ſhade? (*ſhe attempts to draw the branch towards her.*)

her.) I cannot reach it, I muſt raiſe myſelf up, and untie my veil. (*She riſes, and in moving throws down the pitcher, which was at her feet, and ſpills the water.*) Great God! what have I done?—This pitcher, my laſt hope, my only reſource, the life of my ſon!—Oh! unhappy me!—this water might at leaſt have ſufficed till to-morrow, and after that, with a freſh ſearch, we ſhould perhaps have diſcovered a fountain!—(*She falls down near her ſon, oppreſſed by grief.*)—Oh, Heaven!

Iſh. (Awaking.) Mother!

Hag. Oh, my ſon!

Iſh. Mother! I burn—I am quite ſpent, a cruel heat conſumes me.

Hag. (Taking him in her arms, and covering him with her veil.) Good God, have compaſſion on the exceſs of my affliction!

Iſh. Mother, I am dying with thirſt; a drop of water, mother, and you will reſtore me to life.

Hag. Well, my ſon, well! receive then my laſt ſigh.—You are dying, I am the cauſe of it; pardon me, I ſhall ſoon follow you.

Iſh. Then you have drank all the water, mother?

Hag. What do you ſay?——great God!

Iſh. If there yet remained any, and you experienced what I feel, I would not drink it.

Hag. Oh my ſon, could you think me ſo barbarous?

Iſh. Alas! grief diſtracts and confounds my mind; pardon me.

Hag. I wiſhed to ſhade you from the ſun,—I ſtood up.—I have thrown down this pitcher, and cauſed your death!

Iſh. No, mother,—no—that water would not have ſatisfied me.

Hag. How pale he looks!—Oh, my ſon!

Iſh. Mother, give me your hand—that I may kiſs it once more.

Hag. His is cold and trembling.—My child?—He does not anſwer me!—Iſhmael, open your eyes!—embrace, once more, your unhappy mother.—*(She puts her hand upon his heart.)* It ſtill beats. *(She falls upon her knees.)* Oh, thou ſupreme and beneficent Being, to whom every thing is poſſible! Thou, Support, and Protector of the unfortunate, deign to caſt a look upon me! I ſubmit, if thou ordereſt it, but my truſt in thy goodneſs equals my obedience!—Preſerve the bleſſing thou haſt given me; or, at leaſt, great God! condemn me not to live!—Thou art going to pronounce, I await my ſentence.—But it is a father who is going to paſs it!—*(She again falls down near her ſon, with her face hid.)* *After a long ſilence.*

(The Angel behind the ſcenes.) Hagar!

Hag. What do I hear? and what celeſtial voice re-animates my heart?

Soft muſic is heard. Where am I?

(The further curtain draws up, the Angel is ſeen on a cloud, with a palm-branch in his hand. The ſcene changes, and repreſents a charming country, adorned with fruit and flowers.)

SCENE

SCENE II.

The ANGEL, HAGAR, ISHMAEL.

Angel. HAGAR!

Hag. What do I see?—(*She looks at her ſon, who is ſtretched motionleſs on the earth.*) Oh, my ſon!

The Angel advancing.—Hagar, wipe away your tears.

Hag. My ſon is then going to be reſtored to me!—But, oh, Heaven! he is yet without motion—Iſhmael!—Iſhmael!—Ah! it is all over, he is no more!—(*She riſes haſtily, and runs to caſt herſelf at the Angel's feet.*) Muſt I then loſe all hope?

Angel. Your confidence, Hagar, and your faith, do they not equal your ſubmiſſion?

Hag. (*Still at the Angel's feet.*) Yes, I am reſigned.—Alas! if God requires it, I will forbid myſelf even to complain. But my courage forſakes me—a dreadful doubt freezes my ſoul.—Does God wiſh to try me, or to complete my miſery?

Angel. Would you, without murmuring, ſacrifice to him, your only remaining bleſſing—this child ſo beloved?

Hag. I have him from his goodneſs—he may withdraw his bleſſings from me——(*She riſes, and runs towards her ſon.*) My ſon! I call him in vain. Alas! he would hear me, if he yet breathed. The voice of his afflicted mother would re animate his ſenſes. My cries are unavailing, Iſhmael cannot reply to them.—Iſhmael! Oh

name, formerly ſo charming to repeat!—beloved name! now I cannot pronounce it without trembling.

Angel. Hagar! why do you give yourſelf up to this fruitleſs deſpair?—you lament your ſon. He appears dead to your eyes; but do you doubt the everlaſting power of the Lord?

Hag (*Riſing.*) His power!—Ah! moſt certainly he can do every thing; he can dry up the ſource of my tears, he can reſtore my ſon.—Fooliſh that I am! I lamented, and God ſees and hears me. Perhaps, the exceſs of my grief offended him. This idea overwhelms and rends my very ſoul. Pardon, great God, theſe guilty tranſports!—deign to caſt upon this child a paternal look; let his innocence move thee! Ah! let him not, at leaſt, be a victim to the faults, and the weakneſs of an unfortunate mother!—Oh, Heaven! let thy wrath fall only upon me!—but reſtore life to my ſon; let him live!—that I may once more ſpeak to him, and hear him, oh, my God!—and I will adore, I will praiſe, even when expiring, both thy juſtice, and thy goodneſs.

Angel. All, Hagar, which ſurrounds you, already repreſents, or preſages, his infinite beneficence; he has transformed the frightful deſert in which you were lamenting, into a delightful abode. His power, and his glory, break out and ſhine around you.

Hag. Alas! one ſingle object here ſtrikes my eyes. I can only ſee Iſhmael deprived of life.

Angel. Do not ſuffer yourſelf to be dejected, Hagar. Are you faithful and ſubmiſſive? Have you not the bleſſed right of hoping every thing? What miracle is impoſſible to the Supreme Being, who reads the bottom of your heart? he judges you,

you, Hagar, and protects you. He punishes with gentleness; and he alone, knows how to reward without measure.

Hag. What do I hear? Oh, Heaven! what comfortable and divine words!

Angel. Lift up your eyes: see, happy Hagar, the goodness of the Lord is still working a fresh miracle on your account.

(The Angel touches the ground with his palm-branch, and a copious fountain immediately springs up.)

Hag. Oh, my God! so many blessings shall not be shed in vain! you would have me enjoy them; Ishmael then is going to revive?

Angel. *(Advancing towards Ishmael.)* Approach, Hagar! *(Hagar, running to throw herself on her knees at her son's feet.)*

Hag. Oh, great God! my son!—but is not this an illusion? his paleness begins to disappear.—Oh, Heaven! should I be mistaken! *(she lays hold on his hand.)* His hand—is no longer cold.——Ishmael! Oh, God! finish thy work! *(After a moment's silence, she looks attentively at her son.—*He opens his eyes; Oh, my son!—I am dying.—*(She falls down upon the turf.)*

Angel. Hagar, Hagar, revive to praise and adore the Lord!

Hag. *(Coming to herself.)* Ishmael!

Angel. Recover your senses, Hagar, and behold your son.

Hag. My son!—he is restored to me! what, this is not a dream?

Ish. *(Rising up softly.)* Oh! do I revive?

Hag. My son! my dear child, come to my arms; come, and embrace the happiest of mothers!—how say I?—no, let us prostrate ourselves and thank the Lord.

Iſh. What do I not owe to him, mother? he re-unites us.

Angel. Enjoy hereafter, Hagar, unalterable happineſs: God ordered me to try you. He is ſatisfied, and all your miſeries are ended. Bring up this child, teach him to be virtuous; inſpire him with the fear, and aboye all, with the love of the Almighty. This is the moſt worthy homage your thankfulneſs can offer.

Hag. Ah! can I fail in this, after ſo many bleſſings?

Angel. Let your example, Hagar, ſerve for ever as a leſſon; let it correct the murmurs of fooliſh mortals; and teach them, that God knows how to recompenſe patience, ſubmiſſion, courage and virtue.

THE

THE

BEAUTY AND THE MONSTER;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

ZIRPHA.

PHIDEMA, *her Friend.*

PHANOR, *one of the Genii.*

The Scene, Phanor's *Palace.*

THE

BEAUTY AND THE MONSTER.

—— Nato in nobil cuore frutti ſol di virtù produce amore.
Zenobie de Metaſtaſe.

Love, in a noble boſom, produces no fruits but virtue.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

PHANOR, ZIRPHA.

Phanor *is ſeen holding the robe of* Zirpha, *who endeavours to eſcape, and turns her head from him with a look of horrour.*

Pha. STAY, Zirpha, I intreat you ſtay; deign to hear me for a ſingle moment.

Zir. Let me go—let me go.

Pha. If you command, I obey; your ſmalleſt wiſh is an inviolable law to the unhappy Phanor; ſtill,

ſtill, when for the firſt time he ventuers to implore a moment's converſation, can you have the cruelty to refuſe him?—

Zir. (*Aſide.*) Unfortunate being! and how truly to be pitied!

Pha. (*Letting go* Zirpha's *robe.*) Zirpha, you are free; I will not be obliged to violence; you may ſtill run from me.

Zir. (*Continuing to turn away her head.*) Well, what have you to ſay?

Pha. Ah! you tremble—but I muſt needs inſpire averſion, my hideous aſpect cannot fail to produce it. Zirpha, you may hate me; yet, alas! ought you to fear me?

Zir. Why—I do not hate you.

Pha. Well!—my wiſhes are gratified—The happineſs of being beloved is not for me; I do not pretend to it: yet know, however, that this horrid form, at which you dare not look, conceals a tender, delicate, and faithful heart.

Zir. (*Aſide.*) How affecting are his accents!—Why is this? (*She looks at him, and ſcreams with terrour.*) Oh, mercy! (*Going away.*)

Pha. (*Attempting to ſtop her.*) Dear Zirpha! ſubdue this terrour.

Zir. Oh, Phanor, let me go. (*She eſcapes from him.*)

SCENE II.

Phanor, *alone.*

I BEGAN to ſoften her; her mind was opening to compaſſion; when a glance, a ſingle glance, defeated me.—And can I ſtill retain hope?—Barbarous Fairy! enjoy the exceſs of my miſery: thou haſt con-

condemned me by thy ſuperiour power, to drag on life under this hideous appearance; and never to regain my priſtine features, unleſs, in this dreadful form, I melt a boſom hitherto inſenſible to love. Oh, Zirpha! if you knew my ſecret—were I permitted to inform you of it; but the fatal oracle forbids.—How unhappy am I!—Alas! the greateſt, the moſt cruel of my ſufferings is, that of loving more than ever any being loved! (*He ſinks into a chair, oppreſſed by grief.*)

SCENE III.

PHIDEMA, PHANOR.

Phidema *enters unperceived by* Phanor.

Phi. ZIRPHA told me he was here—Oh! there he is.

Pha. (*Riſing.*) Ah! ſay, Phidema, what is Zirpha doing?

Phi. She ſent me to acquaint you, that ſhe is ſorry for having left you in ſo rude and haſty a manner.

Pha. Why comes ſhe not herſelf to tell me?

Phi. That is mighty gallant indeed.

Pha. Ah, Phidema! pardon me; I know how much I am indebted to you, Alas! without you what would become of me?

Phi. Well, well, I excuſe you; I am devoid of malice; in proof whereof I will inform you, that the ſhort converſation you have juſt held with Zirpha, has done wonders.

Pha. Alas! how can I credit this, after her evident ſigns of averſion at leaving me?

Phi. But ſhe repents of them; is not that a great matter?

Pha.

Pha. Still, ſhe will never ſubdue the horrour ſhe experiences when looking at me.

Phi. Conſider, it is now only a week ſince you carried us off; and to ſpeak plainly, I muſt ſay, it requires more time than a week, before one gets habituated to your appearance. Had you not admitted me to your confidence, and engaged me in your intereſt, a conſiderable time before the elopement, I do not believe that I, who am leſs timid than Zirpha, could yet have ſummoned courage to look at you

Pha. You have from infancy been Zirpha's friend, and are acquainted with her heart and ſentiments; then tell me, charming Phidema, ſincerely tell me, do you not at preſent think the hope you have ſometimes given me, was abſolutely chimerical?

Phi. Muſt I always repeat the ſame thing? Well then, Zirpha has ſuſceptibility; with a mind as delicate as her heart is grateful; merit and virtue cannot fail to make the livelieſt impreſſion on a boſom like her's. Hope every thing from time.

Pha. Yet, notwithſtanding the entertainments, the pleaſures I procure for her, ſhe ſeems to feel a wearineſs, a diſſatisfaction in this palace.

Phi. However, ſhe is pleaſed with being here. Left an orphan, and tyrannized over by cruel and unjuſt relations, ſhe was on the point of falling a ſacrifice to their ambition, when happily, you carried us off.

Pha. Zirpha was going to be united to an object unworthy of her, and whom ſhe could not eſteem; ſtill, alas! ſince ſhe has ſeen me, perhaps ſhe regrets the loſs of him.

Phi. No, be aſſured, ſhe continually rejoices in her happy deliverance: yet, the object of her

hatred, poſſeſſed the moſt ſeducing charms of perſon, but was deficient in underſtanding, and ſtill more ſo in delicacy; he was vulgar, uninformed, indeed without one apparent virtue, and to Zirpha altogether odious.

Pha. Phidema, you are acquainted with the ſource of my paſſion for Zirpha; and know it was not merely perſonal attractions which gave birth to a tenderneſs that occupies my ſoul. Oh, day for ever preſent to remembrance, when by the power of my art, I became inviſible to every eye, and placed myſelf in a meadow where Zirpha's young companions were celebrating the hour of her nativity! That melancholy, which overſpread the features of your friend, at firſt ſtruck and intereſted me. She had withdrawn from the crowd, and with you only, was ſeated under a palm tree, opening her heart.

Phi. And you liſtened to our diſcourſe?

Pha. I did not loſe a ſingle word. Zirpha deplored her fate, and the ill-ſuited union in which ſhe was compelled to acquieſce. "Alas!" (ſaid ſhe) "the authors of my exiſtence are no more. "An unfortunate orphan, I now depend only on "relations, who are inſenſible to my tears, and "deaf to my intreaties! But, however, young "and inexperienced as I am, it becomes me to "reſpect their authority, ſince obedience, at my "age, is the firſt of duties. I have loſt thoſe "guides whom nature gave me, and the law has "provided others, whoſe dictates I ought to "obey. If they abuſe their power, they will be "truer objects of pity than myſelf; I ſhall fall their "victim, but I ſhall have fulfilled my duty; and "ſurely there are no diſtreſſes which may not be "mitigated by conſcious innocence and virtue."

Phi.

Phi. Did Zirpha ſay all that to me?

Pha. Yes, but in a manner infinitely more affecting; while floods of tears deluged her countenance.

Phi. Yes, I recollect her tears.

Pha. Then ſhe continued ſilent a few moments.--

Phi. I admire the goodneſs of your memory; for though two long months have elapſed ſince this converſation happened, ſtill you recollect every minute circumſtance, even to the very palm-tree.

Pha. Ah, that palm-tree! methinks I ſee it now; it ſupported Zirpha's head; her hair touched its bark.

Phi. And againſt what tree did I recline?

Pha. I ſaw only one palm-tree in the whole meadow.

Phi. (*Laughing.*) Indeed! you are miſtaken there—but let us try you again. What did I ſay to Zirpha?

Pha. Why, nothing, I believe.

Phi. Nothing! Could I paſs two hours with Zirpha, and not give her an anſwer? Huſh, though; do I not hear a noiſe? Somebody comes this way—'tis ſhe.

Pha. 'Tis Zirpha; I will leave you.

Phi. Do ſo for a moment, but be not far diſtant; I ſhall call you back preſently.

Pha. Remember, Phidema, that in your hands I depoſit the tendereſt concerns of my life.—Farewell! I ſee Zirpha. (*He goes out.*)

Phi. Poor Phanor! how intereſting he is! ſuch generoſity, beneficence, and underſtanding, ſhould throw a veil over his hideous form!

SCENE

SCENE IV.

PHIDEMA, ZIRPHA.

Zirpha *advances in a thoughtful manner.*

Zir. SO many virtues merited a milder fate!

Phi. Zirpha!

Zir. Hah! I did not see you.

Phi. You seem quite pensive; quite absorbed.

Zir. Yes, I have cause to be so; I was thinking of Phanor.

Phi. Well!

Zir. Phidema, till to-day we were unacquainted with this palace, notwithstanding we have resided here above a week.

Phi. It belongs to Phanor.

Zir. Observe me. I just now went, for the first time, beyond the pavillion we occupy. A garden of some extent, divides us from the rest of this huge pile; on crossing that, I found myself in a vast gallery; and judge of my astonishment on discovering there, a multitude of men, women, and children, all differently habited.

Phi. Probably they are Phanor's subjects.

Zir. No; only travellers, as I learn.

Phi. How, travellers?

Zir. We did not observe the affecting inscription placed by Phanor on the gate of this palace; that gate constantly open, and over which we read, "FOR ALL WHO ARE UNHAPPY."

Phi. Then every thing is explained.

Zir. But for chance, I should still have continued ignorant as to the sacred asylum by which we are sheltered; Phanor never would have told us of it.

Phi. Zirpha, your eyes are filled with tears.

Zir.

Zir. Nor do I wiſh to check them. Phanor! unhappy Phanor! how unjuſt has fortune been towards you!

Phi. Ought every bleſſing to be laviſhed on one object? Phanor has received underſtanding, and virtue——

Zir. But that hideous figure——

Phi. Ah, Zirpha! aſk the unfortunate, who are protected in this palace, if that figure, to you ſo diſguſting, prevents them from loving Phanor.

Zir. They ought to love him, they are bound in gratitude.

Phi. And have you no obligation of that nature? Phanor ſhelters the unhappy becauſe he pities them: thus, your misfortunes intereſted him in your behalf, and he carried you off, merely to protect you from unjuſt violence; till, by an acquaintance with your virtues, he became your lover; and yet you cannot love him—

Zir. Alas! I love him when I do not ſee him.

Phi. This ſyſtem of loving is extremely tender indeed! Had his regard for you been of that deſpicable kind which ariſes ſolely from exteriour charms, you might with propriety have ſaid—— "My perſon pleaſes you, and I am ſorry for it, "becauſe yours, to me, is hideous." He then could have urged nothing in reply. But it is your underſtanding which captivates him, and the excellency of your diſpoſition, by which he is ſubdued: nay, were you ugly, he would love you ſtill.

Zir. Ah, were he only ugly!

Phi. In ſhort, he poſſeſſes every attaching quality by which you won his love; and, notwithſtanding this, you are inſenſible to them all.

Zir. Inſenſible! no, I am not inſenſible; but I never can accuſtom myſelf to look at him.

Phi.

Phi. That his firſt appearance may be terrifying, I can eaſily conceive; ſtill, when we are acquainted with his goodneſs, and ſweetneſs of diſpoſition, is it poſſible to fear him? Beſides, though I admit his figure to be extraordinary, yet, after all, I have ſeen worſe; and he does himſelf juſtice, however; he is not conceited.

Zir. Conceited!—Is your head turned?

Phi. Why ſhould not he reſemble many others whom nature has not uſed more favourably?

Zir. You were with him juſt now; what did he ſay?

Phi. That his unhappineſs reſults from you?

Zir. It is a great unhappineſs to me.

Phi. I am certain he is not far off.

Zir. Do you think ſo?

Phi. Shall I call him?

Zir. I dare not—

Phi. Come, come; what childiſhneſs!

Zir. Methinks I hear him.

Phi. Yes, it is Phanor. You turn pale, Zirpha!

Zir. No—'tis nothing—Phidema, do not leave me.

Phi. Here he is! Conſtrain yourſelf and ſtay a moment, I intreat you.

SCENE V.

ZIRPHA, PHIDEMA, PHANOR.

Zirpha *places herſelf on the oppoſite ſide.* Phanor *gradually advancing.*

Pha. SHE is going again to run from me.

Phi. Phanor! I was coming in queſt of you.

Pha. I thought I heard my name mentioned, and——

Phi.

Phi. Why, how you tremble! you ſeem quite confounded!

Pha. I am indeed.

Phi. (*Looking at* Zirpha *and* Phanor.) This outſet promiſes well; the converſation will be lively. (*To* Zirpha.) If my preſence reſtrains you, I will go directly.

Zir. (*Holding her.*) Ah, Phidema!

Pha. Speak, Zirpha, do you wiſh me to retire?

Zir. No; ſtay.

Phi. Are we to have any entertainment to-day?

Pha. I await the commands of Zirpha.

Zir. I never, ſince my entrance here, enjoyed ſo true a pleaſure as one I juſt now felt; one from which you, Phanor, have hitherto debarred me. I muſt complain of this.

Pha. How, Zirpha?

Zir. Is there a ſight more charming than that of ſeeing beneficence relieve the unfortunate? or a ſound more pleaſing than that of hearing gratitude applaud virtue?

Pha. And is there a happineſs comparable to that of being approved by—Zirpha?

Phi. By her we love.

Pha. Phidema explains what I dare not utter.

Zir. Phanor,—your timidity is too great.

Pha. Ah, Zirpha!

Phi. How, Phanor! ſilent ſtill?

Pha. What, Zirpha! did I hear right?—are not my ſentiments odious to you? and will you allow of my preſuming to mention them?

Zir. Do not accuſe me of ingratitude.

Pha. Oh, no, I accuſe fortune only!

Phi. Now we are relapſed into the ſorrowful—(*in a low voice to* Zirpha) Speak to him; come, come, make an effort; look at him at leaſt.

Pha. Phidema, what were you saying?—No, Zirpha, do not look at me; for then I should lose all my happiness.

Zir. (*Viewing him with timidity, and afterwards looking down.*)—You see, Phanor, that you are unjust.

Pha. Ah, may you again prove it! (*He approaches Zirpha: she starts, and is going to fly from him; he retreats, and she remains motionless.*)

Phi. (*After a short silence.*)—Now both are seized with fear.—Come, Phanor, as I am not at all afraid of you, oblige me with your arm, and conduct me to the play. You promised me an entertainment, and positively I must have it. Come, let us go.

Pha. Zirpha, you may follow your friend without apprehension, I shall remain here.

Phi. On no account; you must do the honours of the entertainment; I, at least, insist upon it; for as you carried me off, as well as Zirpha, and I was equally unhappy with her, I have the same claim upon your complaisance—indeed, I might reasonably expect some little preference, for although you are not beautiful in my eyes, still I really think you very amiable. (*She takes him by the arm.*) Will you accompany us, Zirpha? why don't you answer?—Oh, you are miffed, I fancy.

Zir. (*Aside.*) How she teazes me!

Phi. Adieu, Zirpha.

Zir. (*Angrily.*) Since my company would be an intrusion, go, Phidema—go, Phanor.

Pha. (*Quitting Phidema's arm.*)—Ah, Zirpha! can you think so?

Phi. How now? why, Zirpha, for the first time in your life, you are capricious; come, come, what a fuss is here! do you intend going to the

play, or not? for I cannot ſacrifice that to your whim.

Zir. I wiſh—that Phanor went thither likewiſe.

Pha. Oh, I feel the value of ſuch goodneſs; but to accept, would perhaps, be to abuſe it.—Excuſe me; I read your heart, and although what I have done for you is a mere nothing, ſtill, thinking you owe me the return of gratitude, you force yourſelf to combat againſt that natural dread which my figure occaſions: but I ſuffer much more from your uneaſineſs than my own; neither can I endure the reſtraint you impoſe upon yourſelf; reign unmoleſted here; you alone are ſovereign of this palace; command all it contains; fly my preſence, live free, live tranquil, and Phanor, will be ſupremely happy.

Zir. Oh, moſt generous of beings, how contemptible ſhould I appear in my own eyes, could I not, for the future, ſee you without pain! Believe me, Phanor, gratitude is no irkſome duty to a heart like mine.

Phi. Very well, let us go and purſue this converſation at the play. (*She takes Phanor's arm again.*) Zirpha, if you ſhould want a conductor, Phanor would——

Pha. Oh, what is it you preſume to ſay?

Zir. (*Looking at Phanor with timidity, but without terrour.*)—Phanor, will you give me your arm?

Pha. Ah, Zirpha, if you pity me, if I really intereſt you, ſtill I muſt repeat, nay venture to inſiſt upon it, that you ſhall not conſtrain yourſelf on my account.

Zir. (*Taking his arm.*) Well, I obey you; I do not conſtrain myſelf; I make no effort.

Pha.

Pha. Oh, Zirpha, could I but render you ſenſible of what now paſſes in my ſoul!

Phi. You may deſcribe all that at the play: let us go. (*Aſide, going out.*)—Thanks to the Fates, Zirpha begins to grow familiar.

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE the Firſt.

ZIRPHA, PHIDEMA.

Phi. ACKNOWLEDGE, that it is impoſſible for any one to be more amiable, more engaging.

Zir. I am not yet recovered from my ſurprize; I did not think I could ever have accuſtomed myſelf to him.

Phi. That was quite natural; for, while you would not hear him, you could not know either the excellency of his diſpoſition, or the charms of his genius.

Zir. He has ſo much goodneſs, ſo much delicacy!—nay, actually poſſeſſes many of the graces. In what a melting tone he ſpeaks!

Phi. Now, then, you no longer fear him?

Zir. My eſteem precludes fear——but ſtill, the regard he excites makes me experience a ſome-

ſomething ſad and painful, which I cannot define. Yeſterday he only inſpired me with that pity due to the unfortunate. I felt for him, but my compaſſion did not give birth to the melancholy by which I am now abſorbed. Spite of myſelf, he intrudes upon my thoughts, and yet, I cannot think of him without inexpreſſible heavineſs of heart.

Phi. This is extraordinary—for yeſterday he really was much to be pitied; but to-day you treat him ſo well, that he is ſatisfied. Why ſhould your compaſſion increaſe, as his misfortunes leſſen?

Zir. One idea continually occurs to torment me.—His firſt appearance muſt ſtrike every beholder with aſtoniſhment and terrour.

Phi. Well, but is that of any conſequence to him, if you have conquered this firſt impreſſion?

Zir. I would have juſtice done him, and am diſtreſſed when I think the aſpect of ſo worthy, ſo beneficent a being, muſt create more dread, more horrour, than the ſight of a wild beaſt, whoſe only inſtinct is ſavage fury. Alas, the thought is terrible! nor can I dwell upon it without ſhuddering.

Phi. But if you remain in this palace, Phanor will leave it no more; he will ſee you, and you only; renouncing all the world for your ſake.

Zir. I cannot yet ſay what may be my fate—neither do I know, Phidema, whether I ought, for life, to accept our preſent retreat, as an aſylum.

Phi. And if you leave it, what will become of you?

Zir. I am at a loſs to tell; however, ſhould

I determine to remain, it muſt be from friendſhip, not neceſſity.

Phi. But would Phanor conſent to a ſeparation from you?

Zir. Phanor is too generous to infringe our liberty.

Phi. For my part, I am perfectly ſatisfied, and much tempted to continue here.

Zir. How, Phidema! without me?

Phi. I would ſtay to comfort Phanor.

Zir. To comfort him!

Phi. I am ſuſceptible, he is grateful; my friendſhip would make amends for your ingratitude; and by that means I ſhould atone for your ſlights; therefore, do not put any violence upon your inclinations, dear Zirpha.

Zir. How our tempers differ! every thing with you becomes a ſubject for raillery.

Phi. By no means, I do not rally.

Zir. I once believed—however, let us break off the diſcourſe.—(*Aſide.*). I cannot tell what is the matter with me, but I am in no very good-humour.

Phi. You are thoughtful?

Zir. Very true.

Phi. Do you chooſe to be alone?

Zir. As you pleaſe.

Phi. Farewell then, for the preſent, Zirpha.

Zir. Whither are you going?

Phi. Why, as I love chat, and am not in a penſive mood, I ſhall go to ſeek Phanor.

Zir. As you pleaſe—however, I flatter myſelf you will not mention any thing to him of what has juſt paſſed.

Phi. Oh, I am all diſcretion; and I promiſe not to ſpeak of *you*.

Zir.

Zir. I desire no more.—But what will you say to him?

Phi. You are mighty curious.

Zir. How, is it a secret?

Phi. Why, perhaps——

Zir. Then, believe me, I have not the least desire to know it.

Phi. If that be the case, I shall hold my tongue.

Zir. (*Aside.*)—I can restrain myself no longer.

Phi. Adieu, Zirpha; when your contemplations are ended, you will call me back.—(*Aside.*) Let me now find Phanor, and offer him some salutary counsel. (*She goes out.*)

SCENE II.

ZIRPHA, *alone, after a short silence.*

I WAS going to exclaim—I rejoice in her absence—Is that Phidema? is that the tender friend, who always appeared ready to sacrifice every thing for my service? What an astonishing change! Phanor, now seems preferred to me.—I feel oppressed.—(*Seating herself.*) My heart is loaded with the bitterest sorrow, nor can I define what passes there—it is beyond my comprehension.—However, I will leave this palace.—Phidema can remain without me, and to-morrow, nay, perhaps to-day, I shall withdraw myself for ever. Phidema will comfort Phanor, and both will forget Zirpha; so I shall be the only pitiable object.—Alas! I deserved better friends; I merited a milder destiny.—Grief is no stranger to my bosom; but never did I feel such pangs as those

I now endure.—How terrifying is that thought! Who's this?—ah me! 'tis Phanor.—*(She ſinks into a chair.)*

SCENE III.

PHANOR, ZIRPHA.

Pha. (Aſide.) NOW let me purſue Phidema's advice, and try the workings of compaſſion upon a heart ſo tender! *(He advances a few paces, and then ſtops.)* Will Zirpha ſuffer my approach?

Zir. (Riſing.) Yes; advance, Phanor; I wiſhed for a moment's converſation with you.

Pha. What have you to ſay? what are the commands of Zirpha?

Zir. (Aſide.) I cannot ſpeak to him—I feel confounded: *(Aloud.)* Phanor, I am fearful of diſtreſſing you; there is a queſtion, which I dare not aſk.

Pha. Were it poſſible to divine the thoughts of Zirpha, her wiſhes ſhould be all prevented.

Zir. Though the livelieſt gratitude attaches me to you—ſtill, I cannot promiſe always to continue in this palace.—And will you, Phanor, give me leave to go?

Pha. I underſtand your meaning, nor do I murmur at the ſeverity of my approaching fate. This palace, open to all who are unhappy, is an aſylum, not a priſon: you are not only free, but miſtreſs here, while I am nothing but an ill-ſtarred wretch, ſubſervient to your laws, who will ſubmit to baniſhment, if you deſire it. Do juſtice to my tenderneſs; at leaſt do not conſider me, either as a tyrant, or a raviſher.

Zir.

Zir. You a tyrant! you Phanor! Oh, can you think me capable of doubting your generoſity, even for a ſingle moment? Alas! I may be at variance with myſelf, I may be capricious, and unreaſonable; but unjuſt to you, ah, Phanor, I am not that!

Pha. Then read my inmoſt ſoul: I too well know the effect my preſence muſt occaſion. I know this horrid deformity, is an inſurmountable bar to my happineſs; nor did I ever indulge the fooliſh hope of pleaſing you, and engaging you to unite your deſtiny with mine: I have diſerved your eſteem, that is ſufficient; and after obtaining the only bleſſing I am permitted to expect, it becomes me to forget myſelf, and think of you alone.

Zir. You alarm me; to what does this tend? Phanor, what is your deſign?

Pha. To make you abſolute miſtreſs of yourſelf, to deliver you for ever from all which has power to conſtrain or diſguſt you. Receive this box, in it there is a precious ring, and when that is put upon your finger, you will inſtantly find yourſelf tranſported to whatſoever ſpot you beſt may like; where, by the magic of this ring, all you can wiſh for will be realized: palaces, gardens, will appear, replete with every charm of art and nature, and ſubject wholly to your ſway.

Zir. Take back your gift; and oh! ſuffer me to be where you are!

Pha. No, deſpiſe not the laſt homage—of affection ſo ſincere. Farewell, Zirpha; ſometimes think of the unhappy Phanor! [*He goes out.*

Zir. *(Alone)* Stay, ſtay—he eſcapes from me.—Phanor! Phanor!—I call in vain. Alas, a ſecret horrour freezes up my ſenſes, and ſtrikes me

motionleſs.—*His laſt homage*—what means that dark expreſſion?—what would he have ſaid?—I tremble—a train of vague ideas ruſh upon my mind, and cloud my reaſon.—This box, which in ſpite of me he left, may perhaps contain ſome explanation of the gloomy preſage which overwhelms my heart.—I dare not open it. (*She lays the box upon a table.*) Ah, let me fly in queſt of Phanor! he alone can calm the dreadful apprehenſions I now feel.

SCENE IV.

PHIDEMA, ZIRPHA.

Phi. ZIRPHA, whither are you hurrying?

Zir. Phidema, have you ſeen Phanor?

Phi. Yes, and but this moment parted from him.

Zir. Well!

Phi. I knew what preſent he intended for you, and came to aſk how you deſigned to uſe it, when I met Phanor, loſt to himſelf, diſtracted; the wildneſs of his manner frightened me; I wiſhed to ſpeak with him; but he avoided, fled from me, and left the palace, only uttering a ſorrowful adieu.

Zir. Ah, me! what are you ſaying? has he left the palace? then where is he?

Phi. Alas! who can tell?

Zir. A thought occurs. By means of the ring he gave me, I can tranſport myſelf to whatſoever ſpot he may now inhabit, for it is there I wiſh to be. (*She takes the box, and opens it.*) Here is the ring—but what is this? a letter—

Phi.

Phi. That letter will inform us of his fate.

Zir. Ah, Phidema! I ſhudder—

Phi. Come, read.

Zir. Alas! what am I about to learn? (*She reads aloud.*) "I wiſh to rid you of a diſguſting object; I know that you muſt find my preſence irkſome; ſtill, when abſent from you, I cannot ſupport life, but I yield it up without regret. Farewell, Zirpha, receive an eternal farewell from the tender, faithful PHANOR."

Zir. (*After having read it.*) I die. (*She ſinks into Phidema's arms, where ſhe remains in a ſwoon.*)

Phi. What do I ſee? Oh, Zirpha! Zirpha!

Zir. (*Recovering.*) He is no more.—Go, Phidemia, your cares are ſuperfluous. Life to me is hateful.—At laſt, when too late, I read my heart.—Oh, Phanor! I have prepared thy tomb, and my own. The wretched Zirpha ſpeedily will follow thee. Yes, Phanor, I loved thee; nor can I exiſt without thee. (*While ſhe is ſpeaking the laſt words, a great ſwell of muſic is heard behind the ſcenes.*) What do I hear?—(*The muſic continues.*)

(*The ſcene changes, and Phanor appears in his natural form, ſeated upon a throne of flowers.*

Zir. Where am I?—what object ſtrikes my ſight?

SCENE V. and laſt.

ZIRPHA, PHIDEMA, PHANOR.

Pha. (*Running to throw himſelf at the feet of Zirpha.*) Ah, Zirpha! my dear Zirpha! recognize Phanor, by his exceſſive tenderneſs.

Zir. Phanor! kind fate!

Pha. The oracle is fulfilled, and I now reſume my priſtine form, reſtored to life and happineſs by Zirpha.

Zir. Oh, Phanor! with what joy we devote life to him, for whom we would reſign it!

Phi. What a happy day!

Zir. Oh, my dear Phidema! by thus participating in our joy, you make it ſtill more perfect.

Pha. And what do I not owe to her?

Phi. May you always taſte contentment, and I ſhall not have a wiſh ungratified. *(Turning to the audience.)* Ye feeling, and ye virtuous hearts, never repine at fortune; but let this example teach you, that goodneſs and beneficence are the ſureſt means of pleaſing, and the only real claims to love.

THE

THE

PHIALS;

A DRAMA,

OF ONE ACT.

Persons of the Drama.

The Fairy.

Melinda.

Cenia.

Iphesia.

Scene, the Fairy's Palace.

THE PHIALS.

Beauties in vain their pretty eyes may roll,
Charms ſtrike the ſight, but merit wins the ſoul.
Pope's Rape of the Lock. T.

SCENE the Firſt.

THE FAIRY, MELINDA.

Fairy. SINCE your three months abſence, dear Melinda, the children you intruſted to my care have given me much uneaſineſs.

Mel. What, my daughters?

Fairy. Do not be alarmed, the evil is not without a remedy: you know I preſided at their birth; however, as my power is limited, I could only grant them one ſingle gift; and being allowed free choice, I did not heſitate, but beſtowed on each, a tender and grateful heart.

Mel.

Mel. That was ſerving them, and yourſelf too; for ſuch a gift is worth every other.

Fairy. Nor do I repent the ſtep I have taken; virtue is preferable to beauty: and what is virtue itſelf, without a feeling heart? Still, ſenſibility alone will be found inſufficient to produce eſteem and happineſs. I have, on your daughters account, conſulted the book of fate, and diſcovered that their welfare ſolely depends on their preferring the qualities of the heart and underſtanding to all the advantages of perſon.

Mel. They are educated by you, therefore I ought to reſt ſatisfied.

Fairy, I take the utmoſt pains with their education; and yet, muſt own, they do not keep pace with my deſires. Cenia has good-nature, and readineſs of parts, but is conceited, indolent, and ſeldom willing to apply.

Mel. What think you of her ſiſter?

Fairy. Iphesia poſſeſſes openneſs, vivacity, and feeling, but is giddy, trifling, and violent. Added to this, they both already have a large portion of vanity. People told them they were handſome; and, inſtead of receiving this compliment as a uſual civility, they miſtook it for a real truth. They are not diſagreeable, though far from being beauties.—Judge, then, for what they hereafter prepare themſelves!

Mel. But whence can their vanity ariſe? By nature, they have many faults; nor do they poſſeſs one advantage, which is not derived from you.

Fairy. However, for the laſt two months, they have given me perfect ſatisfaction: I have found means to humble and puniſh them.

Mel. How?

Fairy.

Fairy. By making them believe I have rendered them hideous; and (through my art) faſcinating their eyes in ſuch a manner, that, when looking in a glaſs, or at each other, they think themſelves frightful. I gave the hint to all about them, and for the few firſt days, they were inceſſantly told their uglineſs was dreadful. Both, at the beginning, wept bitterly; and eſpecially the younger; poor Iphesia appeared inconſolable: however, I comforted them, ſaying, they had one remedy, that of cauſing their uglineſs to be loſt in their good qualities, virtues, and accompliſhments; they believed me; and——huſh, though—I hear a noiſe, and I dare ſay it is them, coming in queſt of you; ſo I will leave you together. Farewell, do not forget thoroughly to confirm their illuſion. [*She goes out.*

SCENE II.

MELINDA, CENIA, IPHESIA.

The two laſt remain at the door, hiding their faces.

Mel. POOR children! they dare not approach, fearing leſt their appearance ſhould ſtrike me with horrour.

Cenia. (*Weeping.*) Come, ſiſter, ſhe muſt ſee us ſome time or other.

Iph. Do you go firſt.

Cenia. I dare not.

Mel. (*Aſide.*) Let me pretend not to know them. (*Aloud.*) My children do not come: I will go and ſee where they are.

Cenia. Do you hear, Iphesia?

Iph.

Iph. I find, the Fairy has not acquainted her with our misfortune.

Cenia. She looks at us, but does not know us.

Iph. How ſhould ſhe, in our preſent ſtate?

Cenia. Cruel Fairy!

Mel. (*Advancing, and ſpeaking to them.*) Who are you? what do you want?

(*Iphefia and Cenia approach her, both in tears.*)

Mel. Theſe are two ſtrange objects!—

Cenia (*To Iphefia.*) Do you ſee how we terrify her?

Iph. We are much to be pitied.

Cenia. Alas, I never was ſo vexed before at being ugly!

Mel. But pray, young ladies, tell me what you want.

Iph. and Cenia, (*throwing themſelves at her feet.*) Oh, mamma!——

Mel. What do I hear?

Cenia. Yes, we are your children.

Mel. You!—amazing!——

Iph. Deign to acknowledge us, mamma; for, notwithſtanding our dreadful change, our hearts are ſtill the ſame.

Mel. (*Raiſing them.*) Enough: I compaſſionate a misfortune, which is, however, eaſy to be borne; and reſt aſſured, I ſhall not love you the leſs on this account.

Iph. What tranſporting goodneſs!

Cenia. Well! I am comforted.

Mel. Come to my arms, my dear children; be amiable, mild, and virtuous, and you will not ſtand in need of thoſe frivolous charms, which you have loſt.

Cenia. Mamma, I am Cenia.

Iph. (*Sighing.*) And I, Iphefia.

Mel.

Mel. I diſtinguiſhed both of you by your voices.

Cenia. Then, the Fairy did not tell you any thing?

Mil. She concealed your uglineſs, only informing me, that you had given her the greateſt cauſe for diſcontent: however, ſhe declared herſelf quite charmed with your behaviour for the laſt two months.

Iph. People may accuſtom themſelves to any thing: for my part, I have made up my mind to my appearance; and that time which I formerly ſpent at the toilette is now employed in reading, and playing on the harpſichord.

Mil. And had you been a paragon of beauty, you ought to have done the ſame.

Cenia. We conſtantly repeat to each other, that we have only loſt, a little ſooner, what muſt neceſſarily have flown in courſe of time, and by that loſs we have gained knowledge and reflexion, which otherwiſe, perhaps, we ſhould never have acquired.

Mel. This way of thinking, is indeed a happy one.

Iph. It is far leſs gratifying to captivate by perſonal charms, than by thoſe of the diſpoſition, and underſtanding: and, ſhould I ever attain to pleaſe under my preſent form, I ſhall be more flattered, than if I were ſtill pretty.

Mel. Still pretty!——Then, Iphefia, you really think you were pretty?

Iph. I may now ſay what I formerly thought of myſelf; it is like ſpeaking of another perſon.

Mel. Well!

Iph. Well, mamma, without being a regular beauty, I was very pleaſing, nay indeed, pretty.

Mel.

Mel. Seriouſly, my child, you are miſtaken; your perſon, though not ugly, was quite moderate.

Iph. You only ſay this, to diminiſh my regret; you are extremely good, mamma.

Mel. No; for I think you too ſenſible to feel any regret. And did you, Cenia, imagine yourſelf charming?

Cenia. Oh, no, mamma; but———

Mel. Well, go on.

Cenia. I thought my features more regular than agreeable, and ſhould have preferred my ſiſter's.

Mel. Mighty well, you thought yourſelves handſome; indeed, you were extremely ſilly.—You both, my dear girls, had tolerable perſons, rather pleaſing than otherwiſe, but that was all.

Iph. This is not what we were told.

Mel. When you know the world, you will likewiſe know, how far to confide in its praiſes.

Cenia. Ah, if the world be prone to lying, I ſhall not love it!

Mel. We ought to know, to diſtruſt, but not to hate the world; for we muſt live in it, and ſhould procure its eſteem, as it paſſes ſentence on our conduct.

Iph. But if the world be deceitful, I will ſhun it.

Mel. It only deceives fools, madmen, or thoſe who are blinded by ſelf-love. The world is ſometimes unjuſt, but recovers from its prejudices; it has more of levity than wickedneſs; is rather frivolous, than dangerous; in ſhort, it is not contemptible; for it always honours and reſpects virtue, and though it tolerates vice, unmaſks and puniſhes it. The greater the number of people,

the

the more faults and irregularities will be found; therefore, in ſuffering from thoſe of the world, we ſhould excuſe them.

Iph. But this calls for great generoſity.

Mel. Juſtice alone is requiſite. Are you without faults? and will you not ſtand in need of indulgence from others? therefore, learn to grant, what you yourſelf will certainly require.

Iph. I have great faults, but I am as yet a child; however, I will take pains with myſelf and amend.

Mel. Indulgence is in itſelf a virtue, and ſtamps a value upon every other; therefore, even perfection would not exempt you from it—quite the contrary.

Cenia. Beſides, it ſeems to me far more pleaſant to be ſilent, than to put ourſelves in a fret. We muſt deteſt wickedneſs, and ſhut our eyes, as much as poſſible, againſt what we cannot prevent.

Mel. Intolerance always produces contention and ill-nature. Let us avoid the wicked, but if compelled by fate to be their companions, let us learn to live with, and pity them: they deſerve as much compaſſion as contempt.

Cenia. Pray, mamma, explain what it is to be wicked, for I do not thoroughly comprehend it.

Mel. My dear, to be wicked is to have a bad heart, incapable of any ſenſibility, and without affection.

Cenia. Oh, mamma, you are right in ſaying wicked people are to be pitied, for they never can be happy.

Mel. We ſeldom meet with wicked people, though wickedneſs is common, and uſually produced

duced by deficiency of underſtanding, levity, or want of employment.

Iph. What, can we be guilty of wickedneſs, without being wicked?

Mel. This happens daily. With a good heart, and many virtues, we may ſuffer ourſelves to be hurried into the moſt culpable errours.

Iph. But how?

Mel. By faults, trivial in appearance, but dreadful in their conſequences; by ill-founded vanity, giddineſs———

Iph. Giddineſs! Oh, mamma, you make me tremble! What, I might one day—Ah, ſiſter, let us reform!

Mel. Nothing is more eaſy; you need only reflect, and have a ſincere deſire to amend.

Cenia. I will take the moſt unceaſing pains.

Mel. And by ſo doing, my children, you will enſure my happineſs and your own. But who comes to interrupt us? It is the Fairy.

SCENE III.

THE FAIRY, MELINDA, CENIA, IPHESIA.

Mel. COME, madam, come, and receive my moſt grateful thanks; I am charmed with Cenia, and Iphesia; to you they are indebted for a degree of reaſon and ſenſibility which makes me very happy.

Fairy. I am delighted to find you are ſatisfied with them.

Mel. I am particularly ſo, with their promiſes, and the hopes they give me of amending all their faults.

Fairy. Well, I come to offer them the moſt ſure and ſpeedy means.

Mel. Which way?

Iph. and Cenia. Oh, do tell us!

Fairy. Hear me with attention. In order to ſubdue your ridiculous vanity, I have been obliged, my dear children, to render you frightful. Of all advantages, beauty is the leaſt valuable, though at the ſame time, I confeſs it is mortifying to have a diſguſting perſon; ſtill, could I give you every virtue, and each mental accompliſhment for your portion, you would, I think, be amply compenſated. But I will leave the matter to your own free choice, and the following is my offer. I have mixed for each of you two Phials, which contain a divine eſſence; the one will take off your deformity, and reſtore your original looks; the other, will give you every quality of heart and underſtanding in which you are deficient. But you muſt chooſe; for I cannot grant you both theſe gifts united; my power does not extend ſo far.

Iph. That's a great pity.

Fairy. Theſe are the Phials——*(She takes the Phials out of a box.)* By drinking this roſe-coloured liquor, your uglineſs will diſappear; and in like manner, the white mixture will make you perfect.

Mel. Well, what do you ſay?

Cenia. Oh, mamma, you ſhould adviſe us.

Fairy. No, I would have you determine for yourſelves.

Iph. Let me ſee the roſe-coloured one.

Mel. Iphefia!—

Fairy (to Melinda.) Pray be ſilent.

Iph.

Iph. I only want to look at it. *(The Fairy gives her the Phial.)* How good it ſmells!

Fairy. We will leave you alone; conſult together; and in half an hour we will return to know your determination.

Cenia. Oh, do not leave us!

Fairy. It muſt be ſo; we wiſh to put no conſtraint upon you.

Iph. Were we to drink the contents of both phials?

Fairy. That would produce no effect; by mixing, you would deſtroy the virtue of both. Here, Cenia, are your two phials; and here, Ipheſia, are yours. Adieu.

Iph. The roſe-colour will reſtore our original form?

Fairy. They are ticketed, ſo you cannot miſtake, in caſe you ſhould determine before our return. Come, let us leave them.

Mel. My dear Cenia, my dear Ipheſia!—

Fairy (to Melinda.) Again I ſay, follow me. *(Aſide to Melinda in going out.)* One moment longer, and you had ſpoiled my experiment. *(They go out.)*

SCENE IV.

CENIA, IPHESIA.

Cenia. (after a ſhort ſilence.)
WELL, ſiſter!

Iph. Well, Cenia!

Cenia. What ſhall we do?

Iph. We muſt reflect upon this matter. *(They both*

both ſit down, and place their phials on a little table, which they draw towards them.)

Cenia. The Fairy herſelf confeſſes that uglineſs is a great misfortune.

Iph. And we are frightful.—Hah!—

Cenia. What now?

Iph. How ſingular!—ſee, here's a looking-glaſs upon the table.

Cenia. Depend upon it, this is nothing but a malicious trick of the Fairy's.—A glaſs, at the preſent moment, can only be a dangerous temptation; let us not conſult it, Iphesia.

Iph. What a curious ſcruple! We never can do wrong by conſulting a glaſs. (*She places the looking-glaſs upright on the table.*)

Cenia. Let us conſult nothing but our reaſon.

Iph. We ſhould hear every opinion. (*She looks in the glaſs*) What a figure!

Cenia. Ah, ſiſter! you are going to chooſe the roſe-coloured phial.

Iph. (*Still looking in the glaſs.*) I never thought myſelf ſo ſingularly ugly, ſo hideous, as at this inſtant.—Surely, Cenia, your perſon is leſs diſagreeable.

Cenia. Till now, you ſeemed to think quite otherwiſe.

Iph. That was for want of examining my own figure attentively.—Alas! I do but render juſtice to myſelf; your appearance certainly is not ſo diſguſting as mine.

Cenia. What nonſenſe!

Iph. In the firſt place, you are much leſs deformed than I am.

Cenia. I do not think ſo.

Iph. (*Still looking at herſelf.*) My complexion is infinitely worſe than yours.

Cenia. I do not perceive that.

Iph. But look; view our two perſons in the glaſs, and you will then allow it.

Cenia, (*bending forward to look at herſelf.*) Oh, I am a thouſand times more frightful than you!

Iph. Siſter, on what ſhall we reſolve?

Cenia. I know not. This glaſs has confuſed all my ideas. (*She views herſelf a ſecond time.*)

Iph. The Fairy may ſay what ſhe pleaſes; but it is utterly impoſſible to ſhew ſuch faces as ours in the world.

Cenia. Under a form ſo diſguſting, who would take the pains to ſearch for underſtanding or goodneſs?

Iph. We ſhould be left in the lurch, ſpite of our mental perfections.

Cenia. Beſides, may we not amend our faults without the aid of the white Phial? True indeed, we ſhould be longer about it.

Iph. But our hurry is not ſo very great.

Cenia. To be ſure, we are both quite young.

Iph. Come, come, let us heſitate no more. (*Taking the roſe-coloured Phials.*) Here, ſiſter.

Cenia. Give me one——

Iph. (*Uncorking her's, while Cenia becomes thoughtful.*) Cenia, what holds your hand?

Cenia. Ipheſia!—

Iph. How is this? you tremble.

Cenia. Oh, ſiſter! what are we about?

Iph. You know not how to decide: come, I am going to ſet the example.

Cenia. (*Snatching the Phial from her.*) No, dear Ipheſia; you ought to receive it from me, who am the elder.

Iph. But I am the more rational.

Cenia.

Cenia. Liſten, I conjure you. By chooſing that Phial, we ſhall afflict our mother.

Iph. Ah, if I thought ſo, I would rather break it!

Cenia. Yes, ſiſter, doubt not but we ſhould. I perceived her uneaſineſs on leaving us; ſhe trembled, leſt our choice might be imprudent.

Iph. Yes, I remember the parting look ſhe caſt upon us; it was very ſorrowful, very tender.

Cenia. That look pointed out our duty, we muſt follow it.

Iph. Uglineſs is leſs hateful, than mamma is dear.

Cenia. Both ſhe, and the Fairy, have no aim but our good.

Iph. (*Taking the Phials.*) To her, let us ſacrifice ourſelves. Here, dear Cenia.

Cenia. (*taking one of the Phials.*) I no longer heſitate to chooſe this. [*They both drink.*

Iph. (*After having drank.*) Now then, I am perfect!———

Cenia. (*Looking at her ſiſter.*) What do I ſee!—

Iph. Why, ſiſter, your original form is reſtored to you!

Cenia. And yours likewiſe!—Alas, can we have miſtaken the Phials?

SCENE V. And laſt.

THE FAIRY, MELINDA, CENIA, IPHESIA.

Fairy. MY dear children, quiet your apprehenſions, and let us embrace you.

Mel. (*Embracing them.*) Iphesia, Cenia, how I love you both!

Cenia. Then we are very happy.—But, by what prodigy did the white phial——

Fairy After the action you have just performed, you are no longer to be considered as children; nor ought I any further to deceive you: then know, that all the passed was a mere trial. Your affection for Melinda and me has triumphed over your vanity; and think how much this sacrifice, (at once the effect of tenderness and reason) must endear you to us both; think, whether our hearts can fail to know its proper value!

Iph. But we shall still retain the same defects.

Mel. Your preference to the white Phial shews that you scarcely stood in need of its contents.

Cenia. (*To Melinda, and the Fairy.*)—Well, if you are satisfied, we ought to be so.

Mel. You have lost your deformity, and are become more dear to us than ever: such fruits result from your good conduct! and forget not, my children, that in every occurrence of life, the most upright and virtuous resolution is always the most judicious, the most certain of being crowned with success.

THE

THE

HAPPY ISLAND;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

The DAZZLING FAIRY.

The BENEFICENT FAIRY, *her Sister.*

The Princess ROSALADE, *educated by the Dazzling Fairy.*

The Princess CLARINDA, *educated by the Beneficent Fairy.*

ZULMA, *an Attendant on Rosalade.*

The Scene, a Palace.

THE HAPPY ISLAND.

Pride is a vice, that always produces mortification.

Grandiſon, Vol. II.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

ZULMA.

WHAT confuſion reigns throughout the palace! all ranks impatiently look forward to the cloſe of this important day, which muſt decide the fate of the Happy Iſland. The people, are anxious and inquiſitive; nor do I think the Fairies, and our two young Princeſſes, exempt from violent agitations.

For my part, though it is only three days ſince I have belonged to Princeſs Roſalade, ſtill my wiſhes run in her favour; yet, for all

that, I do not know whether ſhe will carry it againſt Clarinda. Roſalade, has the reputation of poſſeſſing genius, accompliſhments, and ſuperiour merit: but ſhe is proud, capricious; ſhe is flattered, praiſed, nay perhaps, admired, while Clarinda is beloved; therefore, I am apprehenſive—huſh though, I hear a footſtep; 'tis my young miſtreſs.——

SCENE II.

ROSALADE, ZULMA.

Roſ. AT length I am eſcaped from that tireſome crowd, who, for theſe two hours paſſed, have worried me.—Hah! are you there, Zulma?

Zul. Well, madam, is the hour yet fixed for the coronation?

Roſ. Yes, the Queen of the Happy Iſland will be proclaimed at ſix this evening.—

Zul. (*Kiſſing the bottom of Roſalade's robe.*) hen, let me be the firſt to pay her homage.

Roſ. What folly, Zulma!—Know you not, that my fate is yet uncertain? that Clarinda may be crowned?

Zul. I know your pretenſions are the ſame, madam; but how different are your rights!

Roſ. No; there you deceive yourſelf. The late Queen of this iſland, when dying, named for regents of her dominions the two Fairies who have brought up Clarinda and me, deſiring them to undertake the charge of our education; and adding, that, when we had attained the age decreed by law, a council ſhould be formed out of the elders and ſages of the realm, who were, by a plurality

plurality of voices to determine, which of us was moſt worthy to be elected Queen.

Zul. But have not you, madam, from birth, the better claim?

Roſ. No; Clarinda's right, in that reſpect, is equal with my own! We both are related to the deceaſed Queen, though in ſo very diſtant a manner, that neither of us can plainly prove our degree of conſanguinity; therefore, ſhe (who had no other heirs) did not chooſe to decide between us; however, by that wiſe diſpoſition, of which I have juſt related the particulars, ſhe found means to grant a due preference; leaving her dominions to the one, who ſhould prove herſelf moſt worthy to reign over them.

Zul. And how fortunate for you, madam, was the Queen's determination!

Roſ. Your ſervant, Zulma! however, I excuſe this piece of flattery, it was well introduced; but beware that you do not touch the ſame chord too often, for though I muſt acknowledge myſelf fond of praiſe, ſtill, it does not always charm my ear; and take notice, the touches muſt be nice to pleaſe me.

Zul. No one, intentionally, preſumes to fill your ears with praiſes; the words eſcape, therefore, madam, you ſurely ought to pardon them.

Roſ. You poſſeſs underſtanding, Zulma; and I perceive, it will not be difficult for us to agree.—Have you ſeen the Fairy this morning?

Zul. No, madam; ſhe is ſo buſied in preparing for the coronation.—It is for you ſhe labours.

Roſ. We ſhall have ſo many entertainments!—I am ſo weary of thoſe things—entertainments!—

Zul. True, the Fairy daily exerts herſelf to procure you ſome new pleaſure. She loves you with

ſuch doating fondneſs!—but that, indeed, is ſo natural!—

Roſ. (*Aſide*). Again!—This continual repetition of inſipid nonſenſe begins to tire me. (*Aloud.*) Zulma, I wiſh to be alone. (*Zul. goes to the end of the ſtage.*) I diſmiſſed Zelis, for her bluntneſs; neither could I keep Fatima, Zerbina, nor Zipha—and Zulma, already begins to diſpleaſe me;—does the fault reſt with myſelf, or them?—What, conſtantly to ſee new faces, and feel no attachment to any body!—Alas, in ſpite of all the Fairy's attentions, I find that I am not happy!——(*She ſits down in a chair, and becomes thoughtful.*)

Zul. (*Approaches ſoftly, and ſays*;)—Madam—

Roſ. Well! what would you have?

Zul. I thought you called.

Roſ. No; but remain here—Go and fetch my harp—ſtay; I will read——Zulma, have you any accompliſhments?

Zul. I uſed formerly to draw, and ſing; nay, (to ſpeak frankly) with ſo much ſucceſs, that I really thought myſelf a model of perfection—

Roſ. Well!——

Zul. Well, madam, the happineſs of living with you has undeceived me.

Roſ. Have you ſeen the laſt picture which I gave to the Fairy?

Zul. Alas, madam! yes, I have ſeen it; it is hung up in the great gallery, by the Fairy's order. I ſpent two hours this morning in examining it, and on returning to my own room, I threw all my ſketches, pencils, and bruſhes, into the fire.

Roſ. There were ſome good pretty verſes made upon that picture; have you heard them?

Zul. Yes, madam; but they do not pleaſe me;

true indeed, I am never satisfied with the praises bestowed on you; I always find them deficient in something.—But the doors open, and no doubt, the Dazzling Fairy approaches; yes, it is she herself.

Ros. (*Advancing towards the Fairy.*) Leave us, Zulma.—

Zul. (*Aside, in going.*) May fortune give the crown to Rosalade! for she loves flattery; I have discovered her foible, and henceforward am certain of governing her as I please. [*She goes out.*

SCENE III.

THE DAZZLING FAIRY, ROSALADE.

Fairy. WHAT is the matter, my dear Rosalade? you seem melancholy.

Ros. I must confess myself somewhat discomposed at this moment, madam.

Fairy. But why so? do you feel uneasy respecting the election, which is to take place this evening?

Ros. Oh, no; far from it; that is not the cause: what engrossed my attention, when you entered, does not deserve—

Fairy. No matter, I must know—

Ros. Well then, madam, I was thinking of the young person whom you have so lately placed about me.

Fairy. Is not she agreeable to you?

Ros. I have no great opinion of her principles: if you did but know the insipidity, the meanness with which she praises me—

Fairy. Oh, that's all.—Why your modesty, my love, leads you to mistake the simple truth for

flattery; believe me, it does: ſincerely ſpeaking, I glory in my work; and thanks to nature, and ſtill more to the education I have given you, there is not a doubt but you really are quite perfect.

Roſ. Perfect! Oh, madam, indeed I do not believe that.

Fairy. I know it; and there you prove the perfection of my work: for, by doing yourſelf juſtice, you would be deficient in one virtue.

Roſ. Nevertheleſs, I have a large ſhare of pride.

Fairy. (*Laughing.*) Oh, yes; pray take abundant care to preſerve that notion, my love.

Roſ. (*With emphaſis.*) Believe me, madam, I have a large ſhare; and, ſince thus urged to ſay it, muſt confeſs I am excelled by no one in my own opinion; is this modeſty, for example?—You ſmile, and think I exaggerate; no, I ſpeak my real ſentiments—yet, notwithſtanding ſuch extreme vanity, I generally feel diſſatisfied with myſelf: how can you reconcile this?

Fairy. Charming girl! come to my arms, dear Roſalade. If you do not taſte ſelf-approbation, who can?

Roſ. I make no complaint againſt nature: ſhe has bleſſed me with a feeling, grateful heart; and I ought to applaud fortune, who has given me ſuch a benefactreſs as you are: ſtill, madam, notwithſtanding what you ſay, I have many faults, to which your love for me renders you blind; but which, ſpite of myſelf, I cannot help perceiving, ſince I ſuffer by them.

Fairy. Always recurring to her faults! Oh, that my ſiſter, who thinks you ſo vain, and who is conſtantly telling me of Clarinda's ſurprizing humility, could but hear our preſent converſation! However,

However, this day, dear Roſalade, this very day, the faireſt I have known, will fix your deſtiny according to my wiſhes; this night I ſhall behold you Queen of the Happy Iſland, and from thence derive a pleaſure wholly unalloyed, but by the grief my ſiſter will experience; for ſhe is weak enough to cheriſh the moſt flattering expectations reſpecting her pupil. Can you conceive how it is poſſible for any one to carry a blind partiality ſuch amazing lengths?

Roſ. I cannot judge of Princeſs Clarinda's merit; I know her ſo little, and have ſeen her ſo rarely, though we have both been educated in this palace.

Fairy. As my ſiſter's ideas of education were totally different from mine, I wiſhed you to avoid intimacy with Clarinda; but now, I think it proper that your hearts ſhould be united; for whichever of the two is choſen Queen, muſt love, cheriſh, and protect the other.

Roſ. Indeed, I have heard ſo much of Clarinda's goodneſs, that my heart has long been inclined in her favour.

Fairy. Yes, ſhe really is intereſting; ſhe has no dazzling qualities, but is good and gentle; nay, though ſhe was born with a very moderate ſhare of ſenſe, ſtill, had I been intruſted with her education, I am confident ſhe would have turned out charmingly. My ſiſter ſaid, ſhe purpoſed introducing her to you this very day; but you do not attend; you are thoughtful, Roſalade.—

Roſ. True, madam.—I was pondering on ſomething which you juſt now told me, reſpecting the Beneficent Fairy.

Fairy. Well!

Roſ. You ſay ſhe thinks me vain, and that re-

curs

curs to my imagination, though I cannot tell why.—

Fairy. Indeed!—

Roſ. I ſhould like to know her grounds for ſuch an accuſation; I never vaunt my own merits.—

Fairy. Oh, no; quite otherwiſe.—

Roſ. I never ſpeak of myſelf; I hate, and avoid encomiums—then why does ſhe account me vain?

Fairy. Merely becauſe ſhe thinks you have every reaſon to be ſo.

Roſ. But her's is a poſitive aſſertion.

Fairy. And ſprings from jealouſy, no doubt; thus, ſhe depriciates your talents, your graces; for example, that laſt picture you did, which is certainly a maſter-piece, was by her not only viewed without enthuſiaſm, but praiſed with ſuch negligence, ſuch coldneſs!—

Roſ. I feel theſe marks of averſion, I muſt acknowledge—nor can I bear injuſtice, it diſguſts—nay, afflicts, and puts me quite beſide myſelf.

Fairy. Be compoſed, my dear girl! poor thing! ſhe has tears in her eyes! What an affecting ſight!

Roſ. (*With a forced ſmile.*) Who, I madam? Ah, believe me, I feel no emotion:—true indeed, I am vexed at having diſpleaſed the Beneficent Fairy, and teſtified my ſurprize, for I have done nothing to incur ſuch a misfortune; but ſtill, I proteſt to you, I neither cheriſh anger, nor reſentment.

Fairy. Oh, I am ſure of that.—Hah! what does Zulma want with us?

SCENE

SCENE IV.

THE FAIRY, ROSALADE, ZULMA.

ZULMA. (*To the Fairy*).

MADAM, ſome embaſſadors from King Zolphir are juſt arrived, and demand audience.

Fairy. My ſiſter muſt be informed. Oh, here ſhe comes, and Clarinda with her.

[*Zulma goes out.*

SCENE V.

THE BENEFICENT FAIRY, ROSALADE, CLARINDA, THE DAZZLING FAIRY.

The Ben. Fai. GO, Clarinda, embrace Roſalade, and aſk her friendſhip.

Roſ. (*Advancing.*) May you but deſire it, dear Clarinda, as ſincerely as I make the grant!

Cla. I promiſe to love you like the moſt affectionate of ſiſters; and my heart expects the ſame on your ſide.

The Dazzling, to the Beneficent Fairy. I believe, they would rejoice to converſe without witneſſes, will you allow of their retiring into my cloſet?

Benef. Fai. They have my permiſſion: Clarinda, follow Roſalade.

(*The young Princeſſes take each other by the arm, and go out. Roſalade, in paſſing, curtſeys to the Beneficent Fairy, with a look of haughtineſs and diſdain.*

SCENE

SCENE VI.

THE TWO FAIRIES.

The Beneficent Fairy, (*looking at Rosalade, as she goes out.*)

AS a Fairy, I have power to read the eyes, and by their language nearly to guess the thoughts; now, I observed in those of Rosalade a violent resentment against me; from whence can it proceed?

Daz. Fai. Let us quit this subject, sister, for one of more importance. Do you know there are embassadors arrived?

Ben. Fai. Yes; and I signified, that we would see them after the coronation.

Daz. Fai. Have you any idea as to what may be the purport of their embassy?

Ben. Fai. These same embassadors were here eight months ago, and must then have heard of the election, which should, you know, have taken place six weeks before the present time.

Daz. Fai. True, it has been delayed.

Ben. Fai. And I suppose, that believing it now over, they come on the part of their sovereign, to compliment the new Queen.

Daz. Fai. Well, sister, tell me truly: what are your real forebodings, respecting the decision which must take place this evening?

Ben. Fai. I guess your's; but permit me to conceal my own; you are more sanguine than I am, and——

Daz.

Daz. Fai. Nay, ſpeak ſincerely; do you think Clarinda will be choſen?

Ben. Fai. I have exerted my utmoſt endeavours to render her worthy of ſo being.

Daz. Fai. And my attention, for theſe laſt fifteen years, has been wholly devoted to the education of Roſalade.

Ben. Fai. You have made her very accompliſhed; you have ornamented, and improved her underſtanding; to ſay this, is but doing you proper juſtice—

Daz. Fai. And her heart, principles, ſentiments——

Ben. Fai. Of them I am ignorant, therefore cannot judge.

Daz. Fai. Nor can I, for the ſame reaſon, judge of Clarinda's genius and accompliſhments.

Ben. Fai. But every one can, at leaſt, judge of her beneficence, her ſweetneſs, evenneſs of temper, and good ſenſe. Nobody, I believe, would heſitate to allow her thoſe amiable qualities;—and as it is the eſteem and love of the people, to which the Queen will this day owe her nomination, I cannot, ſiſter, be devoid of hope.

Daz. Fai. Then you think ſuperiority of talents baneful to a princeſs born for empire.

Ben. Fai. True ſuperiority, is that which captivates all hearts; and ſuch alone obtains my admiration.

Daz. Fai. So you do not allow that merit begets envy and hatred?

Ben. Fai. Thoſe, who poſſeſs ſuſceptibility of ſoul, together with a ſweet and even temper, graſp a ſhield invulnerable to the ſhafts of hatred: and, if no vain diſplay is made of our accompliſhments, even envy, when ſhe diſcovers them annihilates

lates herſelf, or learns to ſuffer the conſtraint of ſilence.

Daz. Fai. Well, I believe Clarinda perfect, ſince you ſay ſo; but, her reputation is not ſo dazzling as it ought to be; her name is ſcarcely known, while Roſalade's even reſounds through regions moſt remote from this iſland.

Ben. Fai. How high Clarinda's fame may ſtand beyond the limits of this iſland, I know not, ſiſter; but thus far I am certain, that ſhe is beloved by all who approach her.

Daz. Fai. And Roſalade is univerſally admired by all who ſee or hear her.

Ben. Fai. Who comes to interrupt us?

Daz. Fai. What is your buſineſs, Zulma?

SCENE VII.

THE DAZZLING FAIRY, THE BENEFICENT FAIRY, and ZULMA, *(who preſents a paper to the latter.)*

Zul. THIS letter, madam, was brought to your apartment, and I received an order to deliver it into your own hands: the embaſſadors, who are juſt arrived, hoped for permiſſion to preſent it themſelves, on the part of the king their ſovereign, but, finding you will not ſee them till the evening——

Ben. Fai. Enough, Zulma. *(The Fairy opens the letter, and reads it to herſelf.)*

[*Zulma goes out.*

Daz. Fai. Why, is this letter for you only, ſiſter? may not I, at leaſt, be favoured with the contents?

Ben.

Ben. Fai. (*After having read it.*) They are unimportant, allow me to conceal them.

Daz. Fai. How! is there any thing you wish to keep secret from me.

Ben. Fai. No, sister; but excuse my shewing you the letter.

Daz. Fai. Is it from King Zolphir?

Ben. Fai. Yes.

Daz. Fai. Then why this mystery? it is quite injurious, and I cannot conceive—

Ben. Fai. (*Presenting the letter.*) Here; since you wish to read it, you have my consent.

Daz. Fai. (*Reading aloud.*) "I know, wise "Fairy, that the Queen of the Happy Island "must, ere now, be chosen: and, from all which "my embassadors report of the incomparable "Clarinda, from all which fame records of her "beneficence and uncommon virtues, joined to "that universal and enthusiastic love with which "she has inspired her country, I doubt not but "she now must fill a throne, so justly claimed by "her superiour merit. Receive then, potent Fairy, "this testimony of my sincere joy on the occasion; "and deign to acquaint the new Queen, that she "will never have a more faithful friend, and ally, "than King ..... "ZOLPHIR."

Why this certainly is the most extraordinary and impertinent letter—

Ben. Fai. And do you think I ought to be offended with it, sister?

Daz. Fai. Raillery could not have been more injudiciously timed, than at the present juncture.

Ben. Fai. Come, come, no asperity, I beseech you: it is true, our interests clash; but still you promised that this consideration should not disunite us.

Daz. Fai. Yet, two short hours will decide between

between Clarinda and Roſalade;—I moſt impatiently await the moment.—

Ben. Fai. And I expect it with a perfect calmneſs. Here come our pupils: let us leave them together, while we go and iſſue our final orders for the coronation.

(*The Beneficent Fairy goes out, the other remains, and ſays*;)

Roſalade, let me find you in the great gallery, about half an hour hence; for I have ſtill ſome inſtructions to give you. [*She goes out.*

SCENE VIII.

ROSALADE, CLARINDA.

Roſ. INSTRUCTIONS!—they are probably relative to the ceremony of the election; for I know not any other ſubject on which I have much need to be inſtructed.

Cla. Then, I preſume, you are deeply informed?

Roſ. It is difficult to aſcertain our own merits; but you, who have heard me ſing, and play on different inſtruments; you, who have likewiſe ſeen my paintings, what is your opinion?

Cla. The whole appeared to me quite charming, and I told you ſo; ſtill, at my age we are incapable of judging clearly; our knowledge is ſo very limited and imperfect—

Roſ. At your age!—what, then you have not been told that our ages are the ſame.

Cla. Oh, yes, I have.—

Roſ. Well, but nevertheleſs you ſee the poſſibility of knowing *ſomething* at our age.—

Cla. Certainly; I ſaid ſo.—

Roſ.

Roſ. But you do not allow that we can reach ſuperiority?

Cla. Oh, no!

Roſ. (Aſide.) Reſpecting herſelf, this opinion may be juſt. *(Aloud.)* I have got a ſtrange head-ach. Are you ever ſubject to the vapours?

Cla. The vapours, what may that be? is it chagrin, inquietude?

Roſ. Yes, chagrin, without a cauſe.

Cla. Without a cauſe! that's paſt my comprehenſion.

Roſ. (Aſide, ſhrugging up her ſhoulders) She comprehends nothing; and has been moſt ſadly brought up. *(Aloud.)* Did the Beneficent Fairy teach you any foreign languages?

Cla. Yes. Oh, ſhe has taken every imaginable care of my education!

Roſ. (Aſide.) So it ſeems. *(Aloud.)* I know four. How many have you learned?

Cla. Much the ſame number.

Roſ. And are you a miſtreſs of them?

Cla. Far otherwiſe; I am a miſtreſs of nothing.

Roſ. (Viewing her with attention.) She is modeſt, however.—What a pleaſing air! *(Clarinda ſmiles.)* Why do you laugh, Clarinda?

Cla. I know not.—

Roſ. (Still looking at her.) There is a certain timidity about her, which is very graceful.—Clarinda, ſhall you be much intimidated by the ceremony this evening?

Cla. Much intimidated!—no.

Roſ. Are you acquainted with the ceremonial?

Cla. Yes, nearly. We are both to be conducted into a large hall, where each is to make a ſhort ſpeech; after which, the council of elders and ſages will decide between us.

Roſ.

Ros. You are right, exclusive of the short speech, for mine will last three quarters of an hour.

Cla. Indeed!

Ros. Yes; at least.

Cla. Ah, I am charmed to hear it!

Ros. You are very obliging.

Cla. Because it will certainly divert me very much.—

Ros. (*Aside.*) How silly!—(*Aloud.*) It will divert you, will it?—I fancy *divert*, is not quite the proper word in that place.—

Cla. Pardon me, but no other would convey my idea.—I find in your manners, your air, nay in all you say, a something not to be expressed, which I never saw in any other person; and which, to me, is singularly entertaining.

Ros. Indeed! this is a species of encomium perfectly new to my ears.

Cla. And is it really an encomium? for I did not mean to make one.

Ros. Oh, I can easily imagine your words do not always correspond exactly with your meaning; and that without artifice, or deceit; for it is very certain, nobody would suspect you of those faults, your countenance is so mild, so open!

Cla. Well, I do not take this for an encomium. Am I wrong?

Ros. Yes; for I sincerely think that candour and innocence are painted in your looks.

Cla. But if your meaning were not exactly consonant with your words—

Ros. Do you know that you possess a great deal of natural wit?

Cla. And pray, what kind of wit is that which is not natural?—I fancy you can teach me.—

Ros.

Ros. Positively, any one would now call her an adept at repartee. But let us return to your speech; is it very eloquent?

Cla. I have composed no speech.

Ros. Oh, you mean to speak extempore.—

Cla. I do.

Ros. And by the advice of your Fairy?—

Cla. By her positive command.

Ros. That's astonishing. But do tell me, dear Clarinda, what has been hitherto your mode of life?

Cla. I have known such uninterrupted happiness, that I cannot look forward without dread, to the change which may await me.

Ros. Then you have no ambition; I doubted on that point; nevertheless, if you are chosen Queen to-night—

Cla. It shall in that case, be my constant study to deserve the honour conferred upon me.

Ros. I am pleased with your answer; and cannot help regretting, dear Clarinda, that I am only able to amuse you, while you make a far more lasting impression upon me: indeed, I feel sincerely interested in your favour.

Cla. I do not flatter myself with the hope of finding any great conformity in our taste and understandings; though, I am sure, our hearts may coalise.

Ros. I doubt not, but the Beneficent Fairy has prejudiced you against me.

Cla. How ill you read her character! no, she is incapable of that.

Ros. Yet I am confident, in many instances, she disapproves the education which I have received from her sister.

Cla. That may be; but I never heard her say it.—

Ros.

Roſ. That may be!—and, if it really were ſo, ſhould you think her right?

Cla. She can never err. Were you but to know, how penetrating, juſt, and good ſhe is!—

Roſ. And does your affection center in her alone?

Cla. No; but I love her as I ought; in preference to all the world.

Roſ. And whom elſe do you love?

Cla. Zemira, the companion, the friend, I have received from the Beneficent Fairy; and who is to me, what Zulma is to you.

Roſ. (*With embarraſſment.*) Zulma has only been three days in my ſervice.

Cla. Can you have loſt your friend? and have I inconſiderately renewed your ſorrow?

Roſ. No—but let us change the ſubject, Clarinda.

Cla. What's the matter, Roſalade? I have wounded you without intending it.

Roſ. (*Sorrowfully.*) Clarinda, you deſerve affection; nor do I wonder that you have from infancy poſſeſſed a friend; though I, in this reſpect, am deſtitute.

Cla. I will be your friend; dear Roſalade!

Roſ. (*Aſide.*) How amiable, how engaging ſhe is! and yet I turned her into ridicule!

Cla. But ſhake off this melancholy, it diſtreſſes me.—

Roſ. Every word ſhe utters melts and penetrates my ſoul. Clarinda, whatſoever the event may prove, which muſt decide our fate, let us not be divided; promiſe me that.

Cla. Yes, with tranſport.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

ROSALADE, CLARINDA, ZULMA.

ZULMA, *to Rosalade.*

MADAM, the Fairy is waiting for you.

Ros. Come, we must now part, my dear Clarinda.

Cla. I will, at least, see you to the doors of the gallery. [*They go out.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE the Firſt.

THE DAZZLING FAIRY, ROSALADE.

Fairy. JUDGE of my ſurpriſe on reading this epiſtle.

Roſ. I ſhare in it, I confeſs; and Clarinda's high renown aſtoniſhes me greatly. I with pleaſure do juſtice to her good qualities: ſhe is, as you ſaid, gentle, amiable, and intereſting; but at the ſame time ſeems to me deficient in every thing which can produce admiration and enthuſiaſm.

Fairy. She has no talents, no ſuperiority of any kind; beſides, I am perſuaded this fame renown does not really exiſt. I rather think that her affability won the hearts of the embaſſadors; who muſt certainly have repreſented her to their maſter in the moſt flattering light imaginable.

Roſ. Indeed, I recollect that during their firſt embaſſy, I very rarely ſaw them; they had uncouth

couth foreign manners, which diſpleaſed me; nay, I even took the liberty to laugh at them, and that rather openly.

Fairy. Then we need look no further; the riddle now is ſolved; and this, will in ſome meaſure, check my ſiſter's pride; for, notwithſtanding all her apparent modeſty, ſhe triumphs in ſecret.

Roſ. She triumphs!—what, did ſhe take the letter in a literal ſenſe?

Fairy. She did not diſcover the leaſt ſurpriſe at its contents, I aſſure you.

Roſ. Indeed!

Fairy. However, the *dénouement* approaches; and we ſhall triumph in our turn.

Roſ. King Zolphir's embaſſadors are to be preſent at the election ceremony.

Fairy. Certainly; I ſignified my wiſh for their attendance.

Roſ. I will confeſs to you, madam, that I would give the world, could we but have their maſter himſelf there.

Fairy. Nothing can be eaſier to me; you have ſuggeſted a moſt excellent idea, for by the power of my art, I ſhall find no difficulty—

Roſ. Ah, madam, how good you are!

Fairy. Not only Zolphir, but all our neighbouring kings and princes ſhall be preſent. It is my deſire, dear Roſalade, that the aſſembly you are going to enter, and where you muſt gain every ſuffrage, may be the moſt dazzling and auguſt of any in the univerſe. Remain here, while I repair to my cloſet and employ a charm, by which we ſhall both obtain the gratification of our wiſhes; afterwards, I will come and rejoin you.

[*She goes out.*

Ros. (*Alone.*) I don't know what poſſeſſes me to-day; but I feel a certain vague inquietude, which, till now, I knew not.—Since I have ſeen Clarinda, my ſelf-diſapprobation has increaſed; ſtill, methinks, I am her ſuperiour; and when I compare our merits in my own mind, that idea receives confirmation; but if I ceaſe to reaſon on the ſubject, and liſten only to the dictates of my heart, all thoſe excellencies of which I am ſo vain appear to vaniſh, and I wiſh to be like Clarinda—ſhe attracts, intereſts, and captivates; nay, I already find myſelf attached to her ſincerely.

SCENE II.

ZULMA, ROSALADE.

Zul. (*Running.*) OH, madam, I have juſt ſeen the nobleſt and moſt awful ſight, perhaps, in the whole world!

Roſ. What is it?

Zul. The coronation hall. Figure to yourſelf, elders, princes, kings, and ſages, all mixed and crowded together. Oh, ſuch things are not to be met with every day!—indeed, I really am quite ſtruck with admiration!

Roſ. (*Aſide.*) The time draws near, and, ſpite of every effort to the contrary, I feel agitated.

Zul. There is a noiſe, a tumult in the gardens and galleries, which increaſes every moment—Hark! don't you hear thoſe ſhouts?—Surely they muſt proceed from ſome extraordinary event.

Roſ. Methinks I hear Clarinda's name repeated.—Go, Zulma, ſee what's the matter.—(*Zulma goes to look, then returns and ſpeaks.*) It is the princeſs Clarinda, croſſing the galleries to come hither.

Roſ. But why thoſe redoubled ſhouts?

Zul.

Zul. Oh, they iſſue from a multitude of poor creatures, who waited to ſee her paſs: it is ſaid ſhe is very charitable. (*A ſhout is diſtinctly heard behind the ſcenes of,* "*Long live princeſs Clarinda! long live our generous benefactreſs!*") Mercy, what a tribe! Why ſurely there is not one object of Clarinda's bounty abſent from that group!

Roſ. They offer up their prayers for her, and with cauſe. Such prayers deſerve a favourable hearing—(*A louder, and leſs diſtant ſhout is heard of,* "*long Live Clarinda! long live our dear benefactreſs!*") How did ſhe obtain the happineſs of being uſeful to ſo many perſons? For my part, I have never ſeen any object of charity in this palace.

Zul. It is ſaid, ſhe went in ſearch of the unhappy.

Roſ. Alas, the dazzling Fairy might have led me to them likewiſe! (*Aſide.*) I feel quite oppreſſed; never did ſuch bitter thoughts ingroſs my ſoul!

Zul. Here come the Fairies, and the princeſs.

ROSALADE, ZULMA, THE BENEFICENT FAIRY, THE DAZZLING FAIRY, CLARINDA.

The two Fairies bring in a crown, enriched with diamonds.

Ben. Fai. THE deciſive moment is at length arrived—This crown, before the expiration of an hour, muſt be placed by our hands, upon the brow of her who is elected Queen of the Happy Iſland. (*They put it on a table.*) Roſalade, ſhould fortune call you to the throne, I ſwear by that

friendſhip which unites me to my ſiſter, that I will always love and protect you; nor exerciſe the power of my art, but for your glory, and the welfare of your dominions.

Roſ. (*Aſide.*) Alas, every thing I hear this day ſerves but to confound me!

Daz. Fai. And I, Clarinda, with pleaſure bind myſelf by the ſame ſacred tie: you, my ſiſter, who read my ſoul, you can tell how far I ſhall prove faithful.

Ben. Fai. I entertain no fears.—Roſalade, and Clarinda, the aſſembly wait your preſence; go—

Cla. (*To the Beneficent Fairy.*) What, without you?

Ben. Fai. Yes; from a fear of putting conſtraint upon the voters, my ſiſter and I ſhall remain here. Go, my children.

Cla. Come, dear Roſalade, nor forget the promiſes which I have received from you.

Roſ. (*Giving her arm to Clarinda.*) Alas, did not Fate and the Fairies compel me to diſpute the throne, with what pleaſure ſhould I yield it up to your virtues!

Cla. No one can think you more deſerving of it, than Clarinda does.

Ben. Fai. Go, my dear children, and ſhew yourſelves to the expecting crowd, not as rivals, but as friends, united by a love too tender and exalted, ever to be ſubdued by intereſt or ambition.

Roſ. Give me your arm, dear Clarinda. (*Aſide in going.*) I tremble, and am ſcarcely able to ſupport myſelf. (*They go out, followed by Zulma.*)

SCENE

SCENE IV.

THE TWO FAIRIES.

The Beneficent Fairy, (*after a ſhort ſilence, during which, ſhe views her ſiſter, who ſeems loſt in thought.*)

WELL, ſiſter!

Daz. Fai. You read my ſoul; nor will I attempt to hide my preſent agitation. I will likewiſe own ſincerely, that I begin to think the hopes you entertain of Clarinda's ſucceſs are not ill-founded.—I juſt now ſaw unqueſtionable proofs, that ſhe is generally beloved—and, perhaps, ſuch univerſal regard may win the diadem: if it ſhould, I will acknowledge that you have choſen the moſt certain means to place her on the throne: ſtill, has ſhe thoſe dazzling qualities which alone can make a reign glorious and memorable?

Ben. Fai. The only fame I ever wiſhed Clarinda to acquire, is that, which I deem moſt ſolid, that, which reſults from goodneſs and beneficence.

Daz. Fai. Such fame may ſerve to carry the election, but not to make her fill the throne with ſplendour. Can Clarinda, who though amiable has a ſimplicity about her, a want of knowledge and experience, can ſhe, who is devoid of taſte for the fine arts, be able to diſtinguiſh merit, or encourage genius? in ſhort, can ſhe read mankind, diſcern their various talents, and direct them to advantage?

Ben. Fai. But, my dear ſiſter, you never heard

from me of Clarinda's ſimplicity, and want of knowledge.

Daz. Fai. What, have you cultivated her underſtanding, and embelliſhed it with accompliſhments?

Ben. Fai. I have.

Daz. Fai. Is Clarinda accompliſhed?

Ben. Fai. Yes, indeed.—

Daz. Fai. No, you joke.—

Ben. Fai. Pardon me, I ſpeak the literal truth.

Daz. Fai. But what does ſhe know?

Ben. Fai. As much as Roſalade.

Daz. Fai. And how came this to remain a ſecret?

Ben. Fai. I wiſhed her to poſſeſs talents, not for the ſake of diſplaying them, but for her own amuſement, and that of her friends; ſhe is not vain of her accompliſhments, ſeeks no admirers, and incurs no envy.

Daz. Fai. Still, notwithſtanding all you ſay, I very much doubt her being well accompliſhed; ſhe has ſo little genius—

Ben. Fai. There again you deceive yourſelf. Clarinda has a great deal of genius.

Daz. Fai. Oh, for that matter—

Ben. Fai. Believe me, ſiſter, ſhe poſſeſſes a large ſhare: true, indeed, ſhe knows not how to ſcoff, diſſemble, or harangue; ſhe never made a jeſt of ſimplicity, or ignorance; nor does ſhe look upon deficiency in what we term the faſhion of the world, as an unpardonable defect; nevertheleſs, ſhe knows and follows all thoſe *petites attentions*; but, at the ſame time, thinks they are ſo frivolous, that to her it ſeems quite natural for ſome of them to be frequently forgotten.

The only thing which ſtrikes her as a ſubject for

for ridicule, is caprice, of that ſhe has no conception, and artleſsly amuſes herſelf with it; for ſhe has all the frankneſs natural to her age. She reflects much, judges ſoundly; and, though ſhe may not, perhaps, be ever reckoned ſtriking, ſtill the more ſhe is known, the greater pleaſure will be found in hearing her, the greater eagerneſs expreſſed to conſult her.

Daz. Fai. I confeſs, you plunge me into ſuch aſtoniſhment!

Ben. Fai. I hear a noiſe—ſomebody approaches, we ſhall have news.—

Daz. Fai. Kind fate!—'tis Zulma—joy ſparkles in her eyes.—Well, Zulma—

SCENE V.

THE DAZZLING FAIRY, THE BENEFICENT FAIRY, ZULMA.

The Dazzling Fairy, *to Zulma.*

IS the Queen choſen?

Zul. No, madam, but if I might preſume to foretell the event—

Ben. Fai. Speak without reſerve.

Zul. Is that your order, madam?

Ben. Fai. Yes, ſpeak.—

Zul. (To the Dazzling Fairy.) Ah, madam, how ſhall I deſcribe the marvellous ſucceſs of princeſs Roſalade, the wonderful effect produced by her ſpeech?—with what grace, what majeſty, ſhe pronounced it! her eloquence and beauty obtained every ſuffrage! Ten times did the redoubled acclamations of the people force her to break off; in a word,

ſhe has now done ſpeaking, and the applauſe with which the hall reſounded, had not ſuffered Princeſs Clarinda to begin when I came away to acquaint you with theſe joyful tidings.

Daz. Fai. I am very ſenſible, dear Zulma, of this proof of your attachment.—Go, rejoin the Princeſſes, and I hope we ſoon ſhall ſee them.

[*Zulma goes out.*

SCENE VI.

THE TWO FAIRIES.

Ben. Fai. SISTER, do not conſtrain yourſelf, but give the reins to joy.

Daz. Fai. If I thought it could offend you, I would ceaſe to indulge it.

Ben. Fai. No, ſiſter; ſelf-intereſt will never render me unjuſt.

Daz. Fai. Indeed, I love Roſalade, as well as you love Clarinda; therefore, you cannot wonder that the hope which has been given me ſhould inſpire tranſport.

Ben. Fai. 'Tis natural that it ſhould; beſides, Roſalade, in many points, deſerves your tenderneſs; nor do I cenſure her for any thing, but caprice and vanity: however, ſhe poſſeſſes underſtanding, and, if her heart be good, may eaſily correct thoſe faults.

Daz. Fai. Her heart is excellent, do not doubt it.

Ben. Fai. I believe you; and have this very day diſcovered ſeveral traits in her character, which ſerve to confirm that opinion.

Daz. Fai. You delight me.——Ah, my dear ſiſter

ſiſter! this unalterable goodneſs, this perfect equity, which you ſo eminently poſſeſs, engages and commands my utmoſt confidence. Then know, that notwithſtanding I now think Roſalade will be preferred to Clarinda, ſtill, you have opened my eyes, and enabled me to diſcern, that the education received by your pupil, renders her, in fact, more worthy of the throne. Miſled by too much vanity, I was deſirous of ſeeing Roſalade admired; I directed her ambition only towards frivolous objects, nor is there a doubt, but all her faults originate in me. I feel, and own they do: however, even at this moment, while I condemn myſelf, perhaps ſhe may be elected queen! Clarinda is adored for her beneficence, and ornamented with a thouſand virtues; but thoſe of Roſalade, though leſs ſolid, are more dazzling; and the very ſages, being ſeduced and captivated, may decree the diadem to her.—Indeed, ſiſter, I cannot help believing, that whatſoever ſerves to dazzle men, will always influence their conduct.

Ben. Fai. Then, do you think they never liſten to the dictates of the heart?—But there's a noiſe.

Dex. Fai. Oh, the Queen is choſen! I hear the voice of Roſalade.

Ben. Fai. Let us take the crown, for by us it muſt be given.

(*The doors are thrown open, Clarinda and Roſalade appear, with Zulma following.*)

SCENE VII. and laſt.

THE DAZZLING FAIRY, THE BENEFICENT FAIRY, ROSALADE, CLARINDA, ZULMA.

The Fairies advance to take the crown.

Daz. Fai. ROSALADE!—

Roſ. Go, dear Clarinda, and receive the due reward of your virtues.

Daz. Fai. What do I hear?—who, Clarinda?—

Roſ. Yes, madam, ſhe is Queen, and by the unanimous vote of the people. (*To the beneficent Fairy*) Ah, madam, why were you not a witneſs to the general acclamations with which ſhe was proclaimed? No ſooner did her lips begin to open, than every heart was melted into tenderneſs; nor is there one ſentence of that ſpeech, at once ſo noble and affecting, which will not remain indelibly engraved upon my memory. All eyes were fixed upon her; all eyes were full of tears; mine overflowed, I partook of the enthuſiaſm which ſhe inſpired, and with tranſport joined my ſuffrage to the general voice.

Cla. Oh, my dear Roſalade, thou moſt ſuſceptible, and generous of friends!

Daz. Fai. Siſter, you have conquered; enjoy your triumph; do not apprehend that you afflict me; I admire your work, and my heart applauds, without an effort, the juſt ſucceſs by which you are rewarded. Come, amiable, excellent Clarinda, come, and receive the crown

Cla.

Cla. My dear Roſalade—I cannot accept this gift unleſs you ſhare it.

Daz. Fai. Ye powers!

Roſ. I ſhare it!

Cla. Yes; ſuch is my ſteadfaſt reſolution.

Roſ. No, no; you alone deſerve to reign.

Cla. I offer nothing but what, at your hands, I would readily have accepted; and if your love for me, equals mine towards you, it is impoſſible you can heſitate.

Ben. Fai. Reign jointly, and fulfil all the wiſhes of your people, who could not place Clarinda on the throne, without regretting Roſalade.

Roſ. After making ſuch a choice, what more can they deſire?—Oh, this day has taught me to know myſelf ſo well, that I cannot lament the loſs of a throne, which I now bluſh for having preſumed to think of.

Cla. You need bluſh for nothing but the outrage done to friendſhip by your cruel refuſal.

Ben. Fai. Roſalade, if your ſoul be as ſuſceptible, as it is great and elevated, can you oppoſe the happineſs of your friend?

Roſ. Ah, Clarinda!—

Cla. The council ſtill hold themſelves aſſembled for the coronation ceremony; come then, dear Roſalade, mount with your friend, a throne which you will render ſo valuable to her by condeſcending to ſhare it.

Roſ. Well, ſince you command, I obey.

Cla. Ah, now you gratify my fondeſt wiſhes!

Roſ. But let me ever find in you my guide, and example; teach me your virtues, make me, if poſſible, like yourſelf; or you ſtill will have done nothing for me.

Daz.

Daz. Fai. May you both, my dear children, long enjoy the happineſs you ſo juſtly merit; nor forget, that the greateſt talents, and moſt dazzling qualities, are not only fruitleſs, but even dangerous, if unaccompanied by modeſty, goodneſs, and beneficence.

THE

THE

SPOILED CHILD;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

Persons of the Drama.

Melanida, *a Widow.*

Lucy, *her Niece.*

Dorina, *who lives with Melanida, and teaches Lucy muſic and drawing.*

Toinetta, *daughter to a maid-ſervant, and brought up with Lucy.*

Scene, Melanida's houſe, at Paris.

THE SPOILED CHILD.

Learn to contemn all praiſe betimes;
For flattery's the nurſe of crimes.

Gay, Fable of the Lyon, the Tyger, and the Traveller. T.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The Stage repreſents a ſtudy, in which are ſeen books, globes, ſpheres, &c.

MELANIDA, DORINA.

Mel. I HAVE long been deſirous, my dear Dorina, of having rather a minute converſation with you concerning my niece; I wiſh you to tell me frankly what you think. I have placed you with her, not only to improve her heart and underſtanding, and to make her agreeably

agreeably accomplished, but, above all, to tell me truth, and to assist me in discovering her turn of mind.

Dor. I have the failing of being unable to conceal what I think; and, besides, my lady is so penetrating—

Mel. Who, I? far from it; that is precisely what I am not: then, does the dissipation in which I live, allow me time for reflexion? I love the world, but still better do I love my niece; and, had I possessed more knowledge myself, would with pleasure have relinquished every thing for the sake of devoting my time wholly to Lucy's education.

Dor. Nobody is better qualified than my lady.—

Mel. Excuse me, I do myself justice, I am not accomplished; I know nothing: I had masters in my youth, but I was educated in a convent; this is the best apology I can make for my ignorance. However, Lucy is dear to me, beyond expression; I am a widow, and have no children, she is my only heir; nor would I put it in her power hereafter, to reproach me with a neglect, of which, from my very heart, I have frequently been unable to forbear accusing my own relations.

Dor. Mademoiselle, Lucy, truly deserves your affection, she is a charming girl.

Mel. This, is what you are incessantly repeating to her, and what I often tell her myself; but we do wrong, we spoil her.

Dor. Oh, madam, we cannot spoil a disposition like her's!

Mel. To be sure, she is more formed than girls generally are at her age. For instance, her readiness

readineſs in mimicking every body is what I never ſaw but in her.

Dor. And yet ſhe is not fourteen.

Mel. She certainly promiſes much; but to all her natural charms, I would have her join great accompliſhments and a good heart: without accompliſhments, we are weary of ourſelves, as I frequently experience. To receive and pay viſits, is an amuſement which ſo ſoon grows tireſome!—and ſtill, it is the chief reſource of perſons unemployed. In ſhort, I wiſh her to poſſeſs ſenſibility of mind; for, if devoid of that, we can enjoy nothing; beſides, that furniſhes us with a laſting treaſure, after beauty is gone; a time, when we feel ſuch gratification in thinking friends more valuable than admirers!

Dor. My lady has a fund of morality, which always charms me.

Mel. I hope, that Lucy, inſtructed, educated by you, will have a ſtill larger fund. Reading and ſtudy will give to her underſtanding, what mine wants.

Dor. The rather, as ſhe has ſuch application, ſuch memory, ſuch natural taſte!

Mel. Yes, ſhe has a great deal of taſte, that appears in the moſt trifling things.—I think ſhe will dreſs very well.—She already does her hair with elegance; but I did not believe ſhe had much application.

Dor. Ah! perhaps too much for her health; her nerves are ſo delicate!

Mel. In that, ſhe takes after me—but you always aſſure me you are delighted with her, that ſhe learns wonderfully; and yet, what does ſhe know?

Dor. She is ſo young!—

Mel.

Mel. When I am preſent at your leſſons, I own that her inattention, and your indulgence, always provoke me.

Dor. But I have already explained the reaſons for it, madam: your preſence either intimidates her, or engages her attention; ſhe looks at you, thinks of you, and—

Mel. You flatter me, my dear Dorina.

Dor. Why, madam, but yeſterday I reprimanded mademoiſelle, for having played badly on the harpſichord before you; ſhe replied; "It was owing to my aunt's being oppoſite to me; and I thought nobody in the world had eyes more beautiful, more expreſſive, more brilliant than hers."

Mel. (*In an auſtere tone of voice.*) Did Lucy tell you this?

Dor. Word for word, and with that ſimplicity, that grace, ſo natural to her.

Mel. (*In the ſame tone of voice.*) Do you really think, mademoiſelle, to deceive me by this ridiculous flattery?

Dor. How, madam, could you ſuppoſe me capable —

Mel. Obſerve me. I diſcover a thouſand good qualities in you; you have ſenſe, accompliſhments, and information; but pray, if you are deſirous that we ſhould live together, do not praiſe me; I hate encomiums, and I diſtruſt them.

Dor. Modeſty ever accompanies ſuperiour merit.

Mel. Again!

Dor. Let us mention it no more. Believe me, madam, my attachment towards you and your niece, is boundleſs; and that——

Mel. Prove it then, by aſſiſting me. I require one thing more, which is, that you will pay

ſome

ſome attention to the education of that little girl who is brought up with Lucy.

Dor. Toinetta?

Mel. Yes; ſhe is an orphan, and daughter to a woman who lived fifteen years in my ſervice, and who, when dying, recommended her to my protection; beſides, this young perſon ſhews the ſweeteſt of tempers, and is happily diſpoſed; you ſee how ſhe improves by the leſſons you give to Lucy; ſhe draws, and plays on the harpſichord all day; I am unable to judge, whether it be well or not; but at her age ſuch a deſire to learn renders her truly intereſting.

Dor. I will obey you, madam, though, I own, I have no great idea of her underſtanding.

Mel. She has mildneſs, openneſs, feeling, and ſincerity; to perſons, to whom ſhe owes reſpect, ſhe never ſpeaks, but when aſked a queſtion, and then her anſwers are pertinent; ſhe excels in every thing; ſhe has modeſty, diſcretion, application, gratitude; ſhe knows how to make herſelf beloved. If we can really be ſuch, without underſtanding, you will allow, that underſtanding is an advantage which may eaſily be diſpenſed with. (*She looks at her watch.*) But I keep chatting on, and forget every thing; it is noon; I expect twenty people to breakfaſt, who muſt be already come.

Dor. Have you not a reading to-day, madam?

Mel. Yes, indeed, and that will take us up till four, and I want to go to the new opera, for I have got a box. Lucy is coming to learn her leſſons, and you may tell her, if ſhe pleaſes you, I will take her to the opera. Adieu, my dear Dorina, do not forget this converſation; but by your conduct juſtify the confidence I repoſe in you.

[*She goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

DORINA, *alone.*

WHAT a ſilly woman!—to * *parfiler*, go to public places, and receive viſits, theſe, are her ſole employments. To her niece, ſhe conſtantly extols the charms of ſtudy, and the utility of application, while her own example perpetually contradicts her diſcourſe. And then, at other times, attending only to a blind partiality, ſhe thinks her niece a little prodigy of perfection, praiſes her extravagantly; and every body, to pleaſe her, ſays the ſame; but when Melanida's back is turned, what a joke do people make of that little girl, who is indeed, vain, untractable, giddy, and will never learn any thing. But what does it ſignify to me? I flatter her, and overlook her whims: ſhe loves me for it; ſhe will marry, be rich, and make my fortune, that is the eſſential point. But huſh, I hear ſomebody, ah, it is Lucy.

* A faſhionable French work, which conſiſts in the occupation of untwiſting gold and ſilver thread: for this purpoſe, the ladies buy old lace, and amuſe themſelves by their dexterity in diſpoſing the threads into ſeparate parcels of an equal length, and binding them up like fagots. T.

SCENE

SCENE III.

DORINA, LUCY.

Lucy. I THOUGHT my aunt was here?

Dor. She is this inſtant gone, and ordered me to tell you, that if you learned all your leſſons well, ſhe would carry you to the opera.

Lucy. To-night?

Dor. Yes.

Lucy. Is it not the new opera?—Well, I am delighted. Oh, that I had known this ſooner!

Dor. Why?

Lucy. Becauſe my hair is moſt ſhockingly dreſſed.—And my new gown—I ſhall not have that till to-morrow! This is provoking you'll allow.

Dor. Are you not always ſure to pleaſe, dreſſed in any way?

Lucy. Oh, I was only joking—I place ſo little value on all theſe things.—Do you think this dreſs prettily trimmed?

Dor. 'Tis charming.

Lucy. Yes, but it is rather faded. I like the roſe-colour better, which I wore yeſterday. What do you think?

Dor. That whatſoever you wear, always appears to me the prettieſt.

Lucy. I ſhould have time to new-dreſs before dinner.

Dor. But our leſſons?

Lucy. True.—Come, come; I will remain as I am, for it will be ſo much trouble ſaved, and I abhor dreſſing amazingly.—Well, what ſhall we do?

Dor.

Dor. Why, your dancing maſter is coming, and when you have danced, we will draw, and then play on the harpſichord.

Lucy. Oh! as for dancing to-day, that's impoſſible; I ſlept ill, and am ſo languid; I am not able to ſtand on my legs.

Dor. Sit down then. (*She reaches a ſeat, Lucy ſits down and ſtretches herſelf with a careleſs air.*)

Lucy. I really have a dreadful wearineſs about me.

Dor. Indeed, you look ſadly.

Lucy. But ſeriouſly, do you think me altered?

Dor. Extremely.

Lucy. Perhaps, that is owing to the ſhocking figure they have made of me.—Oh, it is a ſettled point, I will certainly dreſs my hair again for the opera.—Does not my aunt give a breakfaſt this morning?

Dor. Yes, there is a reading.

Lucy. Oh! when I am married, I ſhall have readings and breakfaſts too. Thoſe breakfaſts are charming!

Dor. Yes, they take up all the time from noon till four o'clock.

Lucy. And public places, ſuppers, balls; this is called enjoying life. How happy my aunt is! well, I ſhall have my turn.

Dor. In the mean time, you ſhould endeavour to gain accompliſhments: if we grow weary of public places, fatigued with balls, and diſguſted with the gay world, it is then charming to have reſources within ourſelves.

Lucy. But obſerve my aunt; ſhe has retained her full reliſh for youthful amuſements; why ſhould not I have the ſame conſtancy? Why ſhould I

by laborious application bring on certain *ennui*, that I may acquire diſtant reſources, of which, perhaps, I ſhall never ſtand in need?

Dor. But does not your aunt herſelf daily lament the careleſs education ſhe has received? She gives herſelf up to diſſipation, more from cuſtom than taſte.

Lucy. To be ſure ſhe yawns at the play, has the vapours after all her breakfaſts, and her head conſtanly achs after the opera maſquerade. Yes, this is true—I am very ſenſible that accompliſhments and education may be of ſome uſe—then, to be conſidered as an illiterate woman is humiliating, and repugnant to my inclinations, I muſt confeſs. (*She falls into a reverie.*)

Dor. You are penſive.

Lucy. Yes, I feel ſome efforts of reaſon which make me ſorrowful; you have juſt ſaid things which have ſtruck me. Why, my dear friend, did you not always ſpeak in this manner?

Dor. I am unwilling either to grieve or contradict you.

Lucy. Do you think, that by taking no more trouble than I give myſelf, I may, in time, have at leaſt the appearance of talents?—the appearance—that is all I wiſh.

Dor. And do you not paſs for having them already?

Lucy. Yes; but between ourſelves, I know nothing.

Dor. Oh, there you are too modeſt: you play very prettily on the harpſichord.

Lucy. Alas! only three or four leſſons, which I know by heart.

Dor. Drawing goes on very well; your laſt head is charming.

Lucy. Thanks to you.

Dor. No, really, I have ſcarcely retouched it.

Lucy. But of hiſtory and geography, for inſtance, I know nothing.

Dor. You know the titles of many books: this is quite ſufficient for the world; boldly aſſert that you have read them all. Then, always have a book in your work bag, and on your toilette; affirm that you are paſſionately fond of reading, and you will ſoon paſs for the beſt-informed woman exiſting.

Lucy. This is an odd way of being learned, and ſuits me very much. Come, I'll adopt it; and then my dear friend will always ſtay with me, and correct my drawings, and my pictures too, when I paint; ſo this again, is a certain accompliſhment.

Dor. Come, mademoiſelle, I promiſe you ſhall poſſeſs all thoſe which are uſual in the world. True, and great talents, are ſo uncommon in ladies of your rank!

Lucy. The very reaſon why it is ſo flattering to poſſeſs them.—Toinetta will really have that gratification: well, I ſhould like to reſemble her.

Dor. This is an odd wiſh indeed!

Lucy. I love Toinetta, and am not jealous of her ſuperiority; but I ſee it, and there are moments in which it hurts me.

Dor. Surely, this is being equally blind reſpecting her and yourſelf. You have an excellent underſtanding and the readieſt parts; while Toinetta, is a girl capable enough of application, but in fact, extremely ſhallow, notwithſtanding her ſly look, and dry ironical manner.

Lucy. No, do not deceive yourſelf. Toinetta unites underſtanding with that ſimplicity and mildneſs of countenance.

Dor.

Dor. You are extremely capable of judging, but you are so indulgent!—Indeed, this corresponds with the comparison I always make between you and Toinetta; she displeases me extremely.

Lucy. I am sorry, for I love her.

Dor. Still, she has a certain vulgarity, a roughness in her disposition, which can never sympathize with yours.

Lucy. True, she speaks rather bluntly, and sometimes offends me; but I forgive her: what is extraordinary, her sincerity displeases me; were Toinetta less frank, she would undoubtedly be more agreeable; yet, perhaps, I should repose less confidence in her; I cannot guess why, but methinks, the more she contradicts me, the more I am attached to her.

Dor. In this case, mademoiselle, I who love you to an excess which does not allow me to contradict you in the slightest degree, am very unfortunate.

Lucy. For that reason, my dear friend, I like you still better than Toinetta; you appear by far the more amiable. I should wish to consult her sometimes; but it is with you I would pass my life.

Dor. Well, I am contented with my lot, but nevertheless, I fear it is not the most permanent.

Lucy. Ah! believe me, my attachment to you is as lasting as it is tender. But who comes to interrupt us? Oh, Toinetta.

SCENE IV.

TOINETTA, LUCY, DORINA.

Lucy. WHAT do you want, Toinetta?

Toi. Mademoiſelle, your dancing-maſter is here.

Lucy. Oh, I ſhall not dance; only give him a ticket, and ſend him away.

Toi. Why, mademoiſelle, you miſſed your laſt leſſon.

Dor. What then, would you have mademoiſelle dance in her preſent ſtate?

Toi. Why, what is the matter with her?

Dor. She has—ſhe has a dreadful languor.

Toi. This I know, ſhe was perfectly well half an hour ago, and jumping in the garden.

Lucy. Becauſe it is not my temper to give way, I am not fond of ſelf-indulgence—but the fact is, that I am ill, and ſhall not dance this morning.

Toi. The laſt-mentioned fact appears plain to me, therefore I can eaſily believe it. Well, I will go and deliver the ticket.—This money is charmingly beſtowed! [*She goes out.*

Lucy. (*After a ſhort ſilence.*) Upon reflexion, I wiſh to take a leſſon from the dancing-maſter.

Dor. Shall I call Toinetta back?

Lucy. What is your advice?

Dor. Why—not to fatigue yourſelf.

Lucy. Beſides, I will dance longer to-morrow.

Dor. Certainly, that amounts to the ſame; then, a leſſon more or leſs, what does it ſignify?

Lucy. My dear friend, how indulgent, how gentle

gentle you are!—But what does Toinetta want with us again?

Toi. (*Returning.*) My lady enquires for you, mademoiſelle.

Lucy. Then the reading is not yet begun?

Toi. No, mademoiſelle, and ſeveral ladies wiſh to ſee you. My lady deſires you will bring your port-folio of drawings.

Dor. There it is. (*Lucy takes it.*)

Lucy. (*To Dorina.*) You will wait for me here my dear friend. Adieu; it is charming to make my appearance in the ſaloon.

[*She goes out, running and jumping.*

SCENE V.

DORINA, TOINETTA.

Toi. (*Looking at Lucy as ſhe goes out.*) THE languor ſeems to go off.

Dor. (*Smiling.*) Perhaps, you think ſhe exaggerates a little?

Toi. Yes, mademoiſelle; and you think ſo too.

Dor. (*Dryly.*) Where did you learn that? I penetrate your thoughts. I ſee you ſuſpect mademoiſelle Lucy of falſhood and artifice; but I am very far from entertaining the ſame opinion of her.

Toi. It does not require much addreſs to penetrate my thoughts, for I ſpeak with perfect openneſs; but I often obſerve people who wiſh to diſguiſe theirs.

Dor. Pray, whom do you mean?

Toin. Oh, that's the ſecret.

Dor. You may keep it. I have no curioſity to be informed. But ſo far I am willing to tell you, that you muſt have the goodneſs to alter the ſtyle of ſpeaking you have lately aſſumed, not to me, for I am totally indifferent about it, but to mademoiſelle Lucy. Really, you quite forget yourſelf; your behaviour to her is inſupportable. You cenſure without reſpect, every thing ſhe ſays, every thing ſhe does; you abſolutely ſeem to deteſt her: and, if you perſevere in this behaviour, take notice, I ſhall acquaint my lady with it; deeming that an indiſpenſable duty on my part.

Toin. Before you take ſuch a ſtep, mademoiſelle, you have too much good ſenſe not to hear my juſtification. In the firſt place, no perſon loves mademoiſelle Lucy better than I do; I am not happy enough to pleaſe her, but ſtill, ſhe attaches me, becauſe, in ſpite of every obſtacle which oppoſes it, ſhe poſſeſſes goodneſs, ſenſibility, and candour. When ſhe errs, the fault does not originate in herſelf: when ſhe ſays an untruth, when ſhe is ſtarſh, imperious, or whimſical, it proceeds from the inſtigations of others; theſe defects are contrary to her nature, for ſhe has an excellent diſpoſition; therefore, when I blame mademoiſelle Lucy, it is not her whom I diſapprove.—You muſt comprehend my meaning: I explain it badly, and perhaps, there is a little obſcurity in what I ſay, but if you wiſh it, I will endeavour to be more clear.

Dor. It is enough. The conſequence will ſhew you that I have a ſufficient degree of ſenſe to comprehend your meaning. But there is ſomebody coming. (*Aſide, looking at Toinette.*) This is a dangerous little baggage, I muſt get rid of her.

SCENE

SCENE VI.

DORINA, TOINETTA, LUCY.

Lucy *runs in, and throws her port-folio on the table.*

Lucy. I AM quite out of breath.—Bleſs me, what a party there is in the ſaloon! Oh, Dorina, I have juſt ſeen the prettieſt dreſs!

Dor. Whoſe was it?

Lucy. Madam de Bercy's: it is only a poloneſe, but it is trimmed with peach flowers, and in ſo taſty, ſo elegant a ſtyle—then, peach flowers are what one has never ſeen before—oh, it is charming!—Madam de Bercy has ſo much fancy!

Dor. It is only to be wiſhed ſhe were a little handſomer.

Lucy. She is much admired.

Dor. Yes; but it is ſaid ſhe paints white.

Lucy. Indeed!

Dor. Oh, I do not believe it—nevertheleſs, her forehead is very ſhining.

Lucy. Hah, hah, that is comical enough; ſo, then, when people have ſhining foreheads?—

Toi. You are to conclude they paint white. The rule is worth remembering, your great uncle, for inſtance, certainly paints white.

Lucy. What nonſenſe!

Toin. Nay, then the rule muſt be falſe; for his forehead is much more ſhining than madame de Bercy's.

Dor. (*To Lucy.*) What did they ſay to your drawings?

Lucy. They thought them charming, eſpecially the old man's head.

Toi. Oh, but mademoiſelle Dorina drew that intirely.

Dor. No, indeed, I only ſketched it, and put a few finiſhing ſtrokes.

Toi. True, you only did the outlines and finiſhed it.

Lucy. (*With a forced ſmile.*) Toinetta does not ſpoil me.

Toi. To flatter is to deceive; and how can we deceive thoſe we love?

Lucy. In this manner, Toinetta, you ſhall always have free leave to tell me what you pleaſe.

Dor. Is madame de Surville here?

Lucy. Yes, with her daughter who is more ſtiff and dreſſed out than ever.

Dor. Mademoiſelle Flora: oh, I ſuppoſe ſhe is very proud of being preſent at a reading party?

Lucy. Yes, I will anſwer for that. She is ſo pedantic, though only two years older than I am.

Toi. It is ſaid ſhe is quite a prodigy of knowledge.

Dor. (*Ironically.*) A prodigy!—and pray who tells her ſo?

Toi. Not the perſon by whom ſhe is educated, but all who know her. For my part, I can aſſure you ſhe is very modeſt, for ſhe never ſpeaks of herſelf, and always endeavours to ſtamp a value on the merit of others.

Dor. To be ſure, ſhe takes particular notice of mademoiſelle Toinetta, and every time ſhe comes here, commends her extraordinary talents.

Toi. No, mademoiſelle, ſhe never commends me in a ridiculous or extravagant manner; ſhe has too

too good an underſtanding to be obliging at the expence of truth; but ſhe always gives me cauſe to admire her indulgence.

Lucy. My dear Toinetta, I think mademoiſelle Flora a girl who abounds with merit, but I cannot help ſaying ſhe has the misfortune to be a pedant.

Dor. (*Laughing.*) Yes, yes, pedant is the very word, it is admirably hit off. And a pedant at ſixteen!—All this promiſes charms in future.

Toi. (*To Lucy.*) But, mademoiſelle, may I venture to aſk in what ſhe is a pedant?

Lucy. In what? why in every thing.

Toi. But have the goodneſs to name ſome inſtances of it.

Lucy. Oh, I will name a thouſand.

Toi. One only, if you pleaſe.

Lucy. Why, ſhe looks pedantic, has a certain manner of ſcrewing up her mouth, and of coming into a room. Now, do you wiſh to ſee her?—here ſhe is.

Dor. (*Laughing.*) Ah! it is the very thing, the very thing, it is ſhe herſelf. Once more I beg—Oh, this is charming!

Lucy. And then when ſhe ſits down, it is thus—on the edge of her chair—looking ſolemn, turning about as ſtiff as a poker, and now and then a little cough.

Dor. Oh, the little cough is delightful! it is her's exactly.—Bleſs me! I think I ſee her—only ſhe indeed, has not that ſhape, that countenance.

Lucy. (*Laughing.*) Toinetta is diſpleaſed, ſhe does not laugh.

Toi. I hear, I ſee, and am inſtructed. I had quite a different idea of pedantry; I thought it

chiefly conſiſted in ſeeking occaſions to ſet oneſelf off, in making quotations, and deciding boldly. But your definition is much more ſimple.—To have delicate lungs, and ſit on the edge of a chair, is what makes a pedant: I will remember this.

Lucy. (Laughing.) Really Toinetta is piqued. Well, Toinetta, ſince you are ſo much attached to mademoiſelle de Surville, I promiſe you I will not mimick her any more; it will be difficult for me to refrain, but I pledge my word. Come, pout no longer.

Toi. But tell me, mademoiſelle, what has ſhe done to incur your hatred?

Lucy. I do not hate her.

Toi. Yet, you ſay every thing you can againſt her; and indeed, if you will ſpeak ſincerely, you muſt confeſs, that you exaggerate her little foibles; what more could hatred do?

Lucy. But do you think this, Toinetta? What you ſay makes me uneaſy. However, I do not attack her reputation.

Toi. Were you capable of that enormity, could you fully it? is not mademoiſelle de Surville a a model of ſweetneſs, modeſty, and merit? and were any one to ſay the contrary, would it be attended to?

Lucy. (*To Dorina.*) Really, my dear friend, ſhe frightens me.—Alas, is what I have done ſo very criminal?

Dor. How childiſh, to cenſure you for an innocent joke, which can only appear dangerous in the eyes of mademoiſelle Toinetta! And, pray, what mighty harm do you do by ridiculing mademoiſelle Flora? ſhe has only to return it, you will not be offended.

Lucy.

Lucy. By no means; on the contrary, I ſhould be delighted. Yes, I wiſh ſhe would return it, for then we ſhould be even; and I know not why, but this raillery now oppreſſes me, ſpite of myſelf.

Toi. As for mademoiſelle de Surville, be aſſured ſhe pardons you with all her heart.

Lucy. How, does ſhe know that I mimick her?

Toi. Several perſons have informed her of it: ſhe told me you did, and I could not deny it.

Lucy. Well?

Toi. She laughed heartily.

Lucy. She laughed, did ſhe?

Dor. She forced a laugh, I fancy.

Toi. And then, ſhe reproached herſelf for having laughed; ſaying, the ſubject rather called for compaſſion. "This poor young woman, (added ſhe) who thinks ſhe is only exciting mirth, gives people but a bad opinion of her heart and underſtanding; ſince thoſe, who ſeem to be amuſed by what ſhe does, judge of this trivial fault with as much rigour, as if ſhe were arrived at maturer years."

Lucy. Does ſhe ſay ſo?—does ſhe think ſo?

Toi. Oh, ſhe is truth itſelf!

Lucy. I muſt have an explanation with her.—I will juſtify myſelf, or, at leaſt, make reparation for my fault. Do not you think, ſhe imagines I have a bad heart, Toinetta?

Dor. Come, come; let us end this converſation, it abſolutely is devoid of common ſenſe. We muſt go to dinner, and not loſe a moment, for we ſtill have all our leſſons to learn before the opera. (*To Lucy.*) Come, mademoiſelle—What are you muſing upon?

Lucy. I am extremely melancholy—I have no appetite, I will have no dinner.

Dor. But if you are really ill, you muſt go to bed; you will loſe the opera.

Lucy. Well, I will ſit down to table. Toinetta, give me your arm. *(She goes out with Toinetta.)*

Dor. (*Looking at them as they go out.*) You ſpoil all my work, mademoiſelle Tointta, but I will be even with you. [*She goes out.*

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT

ACT II.

SCENE the First.

MELANIDA, LUCY.

The latter looks melancholy and thoughtful.

Mel. I AM charmed, my dear, at having made you come a second time into the saloon; the applause you have just received has given me inexpressible pleasure.

Lucy. Yet, I played very badly on the harpsichord.

Mel. I assure you, every body was charmed with your talents.

Lucy. Ah, madam! are these encomiums quite sincere?

Mel. That doubt does honour to your modesty; but take courage, my love, and depend upon it, when you are desirous of praise, there is none, to which you may not justly pretend. Adieu, my dear girl, you must finish learning your lessons;

leſſons; I will go and ſend Dorina to you, and in a couple of hours I will return, and take you to the opera. [*She goes out.*

Lucy. (Alone.) How her affection blinds her in my favour!—Alas! ſhe has done every thing in her power to give me a ſuperiour education. And I, what have I done in return for ſo much care?

SCENE II.

LUCY, DORINA.

Lucy *ſits down, and muſes.*

Dor. OH, mademoiſelle, you have captivated every body; nothing is talked of in the ſaloon but your talents, your charms.—Bleſs me! from whence proceeds this melancholy thoughtful air? why, what is the matter?

Lucy. If you knew what I have heard, and what chance has revealed to me!

Dor. How!

Lucy. After having played on the harpſichord and ſung, I went down into the garden; and in paſſing along the great covered walk, I heard my name mentioned. I ſtopped; the trees concealed me.

Dor. You overheard the converſation, then?

Lucy. Without deſigning it, and even ſpite of myſelf; I loſt not one word.

Dor. Well, what was ſaid of you?

Lucy. All the bittereſt things which the moſt ſatyrical cenſure could ſuggeſt; in ſhort, I heard thoſe very ladies, who had juſt loaded me with encomi-

ums

ums in the ſaloon, defame and ridicule me in the moſt unmerciful manner. Nevertheleſs, one perſon ſingly took my part, and that in the ſtrongeſt and moſt generous terms. You will never gueſs her name?

Dor. I long to know it.

Lucy. It was mademoiſelle de Surville.

Dor. Indeed!—but are you quite certain ſhe had not a glimpſe of you acroſs the walk?

Lucy. Oh, perfectly certain; ſhe was on the oppoſite ſide. I own, this kindneſs on her part, humbled, as much as it affected me, and gave birth to a painful ſomething, which the malice of the others did not produce; their diſſimulation excited my contempt, rather than any angry emotions: but mademoiſelle de Surville's generoſity put me out of humour with myſelf; and in proportion as ſhe ſpoke, I felt my tears flow. Surely, it is much more oppreſſive to ſee ourſelves convicted of injuſtice, than to experience that of others!

Dor. Mademoiſelle Flora's behaviour was undoubtedly very proper, yet, believe me, the deſire of appearing in an advantageous light to the other ladies, and of affecting a good diſpoſition, had ſome ſhare in it.

Lucy. If ſo, ſhe ſtill retains the merit of having ſeized the true means to render herſelf valuable, and that is a great matter.

Dor. Come, mademoiſelle, we muſt nevertheleſs think of learning our leſſons. What ſhall we begin with?

Lucy. I know not. I feel a diſpondency, a melancholy to-day, which I never felt before.

Dor. Aye, becauſe your temper is a little ruffled by the converſation you have juſt heard.

I ac-

mademoiſelle, ſhall I tell you ſomething which will aſtoniſh you very much.

Lucy. What is it?

Dor. Why, all this ridicule, of which you were the object, is, in fact, neither more nor leſs than a very flattering triumph to you.

Lucy. How ſo?

Dor. You may be aſſured, that this criticiſm is only the effect of jealouſy.

Lucy. Do you think ſo?

Dor. I will anſwer for it. Were you leſs handſome, leſs aimable, leſs clever, more juſtice would be rendered to talents ſo promiſing as yours.

Lucy. What a mean vice is envy!

Dor. You will ſee more of this hereafter. You may expect the hatred of the women, who will never forgive your ſuperiority over them.

Lucy. Then women, in general, have poor underſtandings?—Were I ſuſceptible of the humiliating vice, of which you ſpeak, methinks I ſhould uſe my utmoſt endeavours to conceal it, and at leaſt, be juſt from vanity.

Dor. Do not grieve for an inevitable evil. Conſider, the hatred of the envious, is a proof of their ſecret admiration, and their malice only ſerves to increaſe the luſture of that merit they wiſh to ſully.

Lucy. Hatred!—I have no idea of inſpiring hatred. For my part, I ſhall never hate any body, I am well aſſured.

Dor. Comfort yourſelf; you will be hated by none but the unworthy; feeling minds will adore you.

Lucy. (*Embracing her.*) How amiable you are, my dear friend! you diſſipate all my melancholy, it is not to be retained in your preſence.

Dor. Come, let us no longer meditate on the envious,

envious, let us think of nothing but the opera, and, to be ſure of going thither, get our leſſons over. Will you play on the harpſichord?

Lucy. I am not in a humour for the harpſichord to-day.

Dor. Beſides, it is out of tune; let us ſing inſtead.

Lucy. With all my heart. But I have a cold in my head, and a very ſore throat. [*She coughs.*

Dor. So have I too, and nothing is more dangerous than ſinging when we are hoarſe; it is riſquing the loſs of one's voice.

Lucy. Really, I believe I am going to loſe mine. But, however, if you wiſh—

Dor. No, certainly, I will not ſuffer you to ſing; I abſolutely will not. Let us draw, then.

Lucy. I conſent to it.—But I am dreſſed, and I am afraid of ſtaining my gown with thoſe dirty black and red crayons.

Dor. That would be great a pity, for it becomes you wonderfully. You are right: well, let us have a holiday to-day.

Lucy. I am very deſirous of it; but what will my aunt ſay? perhaps, ſhe will not carry me to the opera.

Dor. Oh, do not be uneaſy, I will take care about that. Somebody is coming I believe: ah, it is Toinetta.

SCENE

SCENE III.

LUCY, DORINA, TOINETTA.

Lucy. WHAT do you want, Toinetta?

Toi. As my lady has given me leave, mademoiſelle, I am come to be preſent at your leſſon, and to improve by it.

Dor. You are come too late, the leſſon is finiſhed.

Toi. How ſorry I am! I take ſuch pleaſure in improving myſelf!

Dor. And reſpecting that, you have a fine pattern before your eyes.

Toi. In whom pray?

Dor. (*Pointing to Lucy.*) Why mademoiſelle, to be ſure.

Toi. Mademoiſelle, a model of application? well, I ſhould never have gueſſed that.

Lucy. (*aſide.*) Nor I neither.

Dor. Why, Toinetta, I cannot believe you have the preſumption to think you have made more progreſs, or are better informed than mademoiſelle?

Toi. Alas! pardon me—

Dor. How? you are wanting in reſpect towards her.

Toi. That is by no means my intention.

Dor. Learn, moreover, that ſhe could do without accompliſhments. When people are ſo charming, they need none.

Toi. It is you mademoiſelle, who at this moment, do not treat her with proper reſpect.

Dor.

Dor. How ſo?

Toi. You are laughing at her.

Lucy. (*Aſide.*) Indeed I believe ſhe is right.

Dor. Really, Toinetta, you are very impertinent.

Lucy. Pray, do not be angry with her.

Dor. You take her part when ſhe wrongs you!—what generoſity!—Yes, you poſſeſs every virtue.

Toi. (*To Dorina.*) Oh, now I think of it, mademoiſelle, my lady ordered me to ſay, you were to come when the leſſon was finiſhed and give her an account of it.

Dor. I am going to her. (*Low to Lucy.*) Make yourſelf eaſy, I will tell wonders of you, and your improvements. (*Aloud.*) Adieu, mademoiſelle; I ſhall ſoon come back and rejoin you.

[*She goes out.*

SCENE IV.

LUCY, TOINETTA.

Lucy. (*Aſide.*) SHE is going to tell my aunt a lie, ſhe is going to deceive her; this makes me dreadfully uneaſy.

Toi. Mademoiſelle, you look melancholy; is it becauſe you are angry with me?

Lucy. No, my dear Toinetta—but I have vexations, and indeed have had them for this long while paſt.

Toi. Well, now you really afflict me.

Lucy. Then, do you love me, Toinetta?

Toi. Oh, yes—but I do not love Dorina.

Lucy. Why?

Toi.

Toi. Becauſe ſhe tells lies, and that is ſo mean!

Lucy. I could intruſt you with a ſecret, but you muſt promiſe not to reveal it to any body, not even to my aunt.

Toi. Ah, does not my lady herſelf ſay, that we muſt not diſcloſe a ſecret?

Lucy. Then I may rely upon you?

Toi. Fully.

Lucy. Well, Toinetta, I love Dorina, but I confeſs, for ſome time paſſed I have perceived ſhe flatters me too much.

Toi. Oh, for that matter, I would lay a wager, I diſcovered it before you did.

Lucy. Her commendations are too ſtrong to be ſincere.

Toi. Even juſt now.

Lucy. I obſerved it; and then, ſhe deceives my aunt about my leſſons. I commonly paſs half the time in idleneſs, which ſhe conceals.

Toi. I ſee it daily.

Lucy. However, this is nothing, in compariſon with what has occurred to-day.

Toi. What is that?

Luty. When ſhe tells my aunt, that I have been very diligent, that I have learned my leſſons well, this is not ſtrictly true, but I have always done ſomething, at leaſt.

Toi. Yes—in a moderate way.

Lucy. But only think, to-day—really I dare not go on.

Toi. Do ſpeak, mademoiſelle.

Lucy. To-day, Toinetta, I have done nothing at all.

Toi. What, did you neither ſing, draw, nor play on the harpſichord?

Lucy.

Lucy. No, I did not even attempt it; yet, at this moment ſhe is telling my aunt I have done wonders.

Toi. Oh, how wicked!

Lucy. It is really a dreadful lie.

Toi. Ah, mademoiſelle! confeſs every thing to my lady.

Lucy. I cannot, Dorina would then be diſmiſſed.

Toi. A liar, is a great loſs indeed!

Lucy. With all her faults ſhe loves me, and that idea attaches me to her.

Toi. If ſhe loved, would ſhe flatter you? would ſhe paſs over all your whims? would ſhe not endeavour to cure you of them?

Lucy. True—but ſtill I cannot help thinking ſhe has a friendſhip for me; ſhe ſo frequently repeats it.

Toi. Do you not know, that lies coſt her nothing?

Lucy. This would be ſo baſe a lie!

Toi. Not more baſe than to deceive my lady, who places confidence in her.

Lucy. In ſhort, I muſt have a very clear proof, before I am perſuaded ſhe has no regard for me; and as I have none, I abſolutely will not be the cauſe of her diſmiſſion; keep my ſecret faithfully, Toinetta.

Toi. You may depend upon it.—But I hear my lady's voice. It is ſhe herſelf, and Dorina follows her.

SCENE

SCENE V.

TOINETTA, LUCY, MELANIDA, DORINA.

Melanida *to Lucy.*

COME, my dear Lucy, embrace me; Dorina is delighted with you, and every thing ſhe has ſaid gives me the greateſt ſatisfaction.

Lucy. (*Aſide.*) This pierces me to the ſoul.

Mel. If you always conduct yourſelf thus, you will conſtitute my happineſs.

Lucy. (*With embarraſſment.*) Aunt—

Mel. Promiſe me, my dear, that it ſhall daily be the ſame.—You give me no anſwer; your eyes are caſt down.—Will you not make an engagement which would render me ſo happy?

Dor. Oh, I am certain, mademoiſelle would fulfil it with pleaſure.

Lucy. (*Haſtily to Dorina.*) No, Dorina, no.

Dor. (*To Lucy.*) Why, you do not conſider.

Mel. (*To Lucy.*) Well, Lucy, I am not offended by what you have juſt ſaid; it is honeſt, at leaſt. I wiſh you to be accompliſhed, but above all things to be ſincere; that is the firſt of virtues.

Lucy. (*Aſide.*) What uneaſineſs all this gives me! what a reproach!

Mel. Let us talk no more of ſtudy to-day; Dorina is ſatisfied with you, you muſt be rewarded for it; let us think only of amuſing ourſelves.

Lucy. Indeed, aunt, I deſerve no reward.

Mel. That opinion renders you ſtill more worthy of it.

Dor.

Dor. (*Low to Lucy.*) Lay aſide that embarraſſed air.

Lucy. (*Peeviſhly to Dorina.*) Let me alone.

Mel. (*To Lucy.*) My dear, I obſerve a dejection, an alteration in you: are you ill?

Lucy. No, aunt.

Mel. It is owing to the leſſon, which required too much exertion. (*To Dorina.*) You muſt not again ſet ſuch long ones. I do not wiſh to fatigue her.

Lucy. (*Aſide.*) Every word ſhe ſays affects me!

Mel. It is only four o'clock; I am going to take a turn in the garden before I finiſh dreſſing. Will you go with me, Lucy?

Lucy. Willingly, aunt.

Mel. The air will do you good, for I dare ſay you have the head-ach; come, my love. (*She leans upon Lucy, they go out; Toinetta follows them.*)

SCENE VI.

DORINA, *alone.*

LUCY ſeriouſly pouts at me; what can be the meaning of it?—She is a capricious little creature.—But while I am alone, let me again run over the letter I began this morning. Really I have not one moment to myſelf. (*She feels in her pocket.*) Ah, this is not it, but quite a different thing. As I hope to be ſaved, I do think I have loſt it!—that would be dreadful. (*She ſtill feels in her pocket.*) I cannot find it; perhaps, it is left on my table.—Alas, how alarming!—well, I will go and look for it. [*She advances ſome ſteps,*

SCENE

SCENE VII.

DORINA, TOINETTA.

Toi. HEYDAY! mademoiſelle, whither are you running ſo faſt?

Dor. Have you not found a paper by chance?

Toi. How is it done up?

Dor. It is a ſheet folded.

Toi. Is there any writing in it?

Dor. Yes.

Toi. Two pages?

Dor. Ah, it is mine. Come, give it to me directly.

Toi. Stay, don't imagine I have found it; I was joking.

Dor. Plague take the little blockhead, for amuſing and detaining me here!—Come, come, it muſt be found. [*She goes out.*

Toi. (*Alone.*) Yes, yes, make haſte. You will not find it again, though.—Little blockhead, does ſhe ſay?—not ſo much of a blockhead, neither.—Ah, luckily here is mademoiſelle Lucy.

SCENE VIII.

TOINETTA, LUCY.

Toi. COME, mademoiſelle, come here; I have ſomething odd to tell you.

Lucy. About what?

Toi. Do you ſtill believe, that mademoiſelle Dorina has a friendſhip for you?

Lucy.

Lucy. I have no freſh cauſe to doubt it.

Toi. Do you know her hand-writing?

Lucy. I think ſo.

Toi. (*Taking a letter out of her pocket.*) Well now, here is a letter which ſhe has begun, will you hear how ſhe treats you?

Lucy. Have you read it?

Toi. Yes; firſt without knowing what it was, and a ſecond time to be clear as to her conduct.

Lucy. You have done a very wrong thing Toinetta; we ought not—

Toi. I acknowledge it; but the fault proceeded from my attachment to you. I ſaw you were mentioned in this letter, and I wiſhed to be fully ſatisfied on the point. Come, here it is.

Lucy. If you give it to me, it will go into the fire unopened.

Toi. Oh! In that caſe, I ſhall keep it. Hear me, mademoiſelle, the miſchief is done, profit by it.

Lucy. But how did this paper fall into your hands?

Toi. I found it on the ſtairs.

Lucy. Does Dorina ſpeak ill of me in it?

Toi. Perhaps, nothing but the truth. I will read, do you judge. (*She reads aloud.*) "Pity "me, my dear friend, not only for being ſeparated "from you, but ſtill more for the miſerable life I "lead here. The little girl, whom I have formerly "mentioned to you, plagues me daily more and "more—

Lucy. (*Interrupting her.*) My name is not there; perhaps ſhe means you.

Toi. Hear to the end. (*She reads.*) "As an ad-"ditional trouble, I am obliged to praiſe and flat-"ter her, becauſe ſhe is ſo vain, as to be pleaſed "by no other means."—

Lucy. Aſtoniſhing!

Toi. (*Still reading.*) "She thinks herſelf a little "prodigy of underſtanding; when, in fact, ſhe "does not poſſeſs common ſenſe, having all the "faults which folly produces. She is proud, turns "others into ridicule, and ſpends her time either "in idleneſs, jeering, and detraction, or before a "looking-glaſs, contemplating the moſt moderate, "and common figure you ever ſaw. In ſhort, "Lucy—(*She interrupts herſelf.*) The name is here "this once.

Lucy. Ah! how ſhocking!—

Toi. (*Going on.*) "In ſhort, Lucy will un-"doubtedly grow up the moſt abſurd, impertinent "young woman"—This is all, mademoiſelle; the letter is not finiſhed—She ſtopped in a fine place.

Lucy. Give it to me, I will read it myſelf. (*She takes the letter, and reads it to herſelf.*)

Toi. See, it is there; I have added nothing.

Lucy. (*Returning the letter.*) Can any mind be baſe enough to carry falſehood to ſuch lengths? I may poſſeſs all the faults which ſhe diſcovers; but why conceal them from me? why not warn me of them? I might then have been able to amend.

Toi. You muſt tell my lady every thing.

Lucy. But will not this have an appearance of revenge? and revenge is very blameable.

Toi. It will not be revenging yourſelf, but ceaſing to deceive my lady.

Lucy. I ſhall not mention the letter, I ſhall only make a confeſſion of the lye which has juſt been told her.

Toi. That confeſſion may not, perhaps, be ſufficient to produce Dorina's diſcharge; my lady is ſo good!

Lucy.

Lucy. No matter; it is my fixed determination to tell her only that.

Toi. I am going in ſearch of my lady.

Lucy. Say nothing to her; I wiſh to acknowledge my fault myſelf.

Toi. (*Aſide.*) So, ſo, ſhe will not mention the letter to my lady; but I will ſhew it. The wicked muſt be puniſhed. [*She goes out.*

Lucy. (*Alone.*) What ingratitude! what falſehood! I ought to pity her for being ſo wicked; it muſt occaſion a great deal of repentance—We are not born ſo; this reſults from the badneſs of her education.—Alas! perhaps, ſhe was flattered in her childhood!—Odious flattery, I deteſt you for ever! (*She throws herſelf into a chair.*)

SCENE IX.

DORINA, LUCY.

Dor. (*At the end of the ſtage, without ſeeing Lucy.*) I CANNOT find it. It is enough to turn one's head.

Lucy. (*Aſide, riſing.*) It is ſhe, my heart flutters. (*Aloud.*) What are you looking for?

Dor. Nothing. But what were you doing there all alone?

Lucy. I was muſing.

Dor. On what?

Lucy. A thouſand things—For inſtance, I was thinking of my faults.

Dor. So, you are taken up with chimeras; I ſhall reprimand you for employing your time ſo badly.

Lucy. No; at length I am acquainted with myſelf—and could wiſh to amend; but you muſt aſſiſt me, and tell me truth—inform me of my errours, ſhew me all my faults; in a word, become ſincere. On that condition, I may ſtill—yes, I may ſtill, Dorina, retain my friendſhip for you.

Dor. What means this language?—this melancholy, this conſtraint?

Lucy. That I cannot diſſemble.—That dreadful vice, at leaſt, I do not yet poſſeſs. I will ſummon friendſhip to my aſſiſtance; ſhe will not flatter, ſhe will tell me truth.—I am young, and ſhall, perhaps, be able to ſubdue thoſe faults, with which I have been too juſtly reproached!

Dor. What do I hear!—Ah, I am ruined!

Lucy. I do not reſent your deſcribing me ſuch as I appear, and ſuch, perhaps, as I really am; but ſtill, when you enumerated all my faults, it was wrong to complain of them, ſince they are your own work.

Dor. Enough; ſpare me the reſt, and receive my farewell.

Lucy. Your farewell!—Why leave me? I repeat it, you may atone for your faults.—Deceive me no longer, and ſtay.

Dor. No, mademoiſelle, I muſt bid you an eternal adieu.

Lucy. Eternal!—Stop, Dorina—what will become of you?

Dor. I know not.

Lucy. Well, ſtay with me, I conjure you; depend upon it, my aunt ſhall remain ignorant of what has happened.

Dor. But you, mademoiſelle, can you forget it?

Lucy.

Lucy. Forget it! no; but doubt not of my forgiveneſs.

Dor. This is not enough, my preſence would be irkſome; I muſt ſpare you that uneaſineſs—Adieu, mademoiſelle. (*She goes out.*)

Lucy. (*ſoftened.*) Attend—attend.—She leaves me! whither will ſhe go? Spite of myſelf, I feel my tears are flowing.—She deceived, ſhe hated me: I ceaſe to eſteem her, I ought not to love her—but I once did—this recollection affects me. She can no longer remain dear to me; and yet I retain an intereſt in her fate.—But ſomebody comes;—ah, it is my aunt!

SCENE X. And laſt.

MELANIDA, TOINETTA, LUCY.

Mel. I AM come, my dear Lucy, to return you thanks for your intention of confeſſing your faults to me.

Lucy. What, aunt, has Toinetta told you?—

Mel. She has told every thing, and ſhewn me the letter, notwithſtanding your prohibition, which, however, I commend. Dorina has received the juſt reward of her enormities; her hypocriſy is diſcovered, and ſhe is diſcharged.

Lucy. What, you have juſt met her then?

Mel. This moment, and I have diſmiſſed her.

Lucy. But where will ſhe find an aſylum?

Mel. I know not.

Lucy. Oh, madam! ſhe is deſtitute of fortune: I conjure you—

Mel. Enough; ſince you deſire it, I promiſe to make the neceſſary proviſion for her. Thanks to heaven, her imprudence has, at length, atoned for the injury you received from her falſehood. Let this ſad experience teach you, my dear, to diſtruſt flatterers, and cheriſh truth; for truth alone can point out our errours, and check that vanity by which we are ſeduced and miſled.

THE

THE

INQUISTIVE GIRL;

A DRAMA,

OF TWO ACTS.

PERSONS of the DRAMA.

The Marchioneſs de VALCOUR.

SOPHIA, *daughter to the Marchioneſs.*

PAULINA, *ſiſter to Sophia.*

CONSTANCE, *nicce to the Marchioneſs.*

The Chevalier de VALCOUR, *ſon to the Marchioneſs, a mute character. He ſhould be dreſſed in regimentals, with his hair flowing and in diſorder.*

ROSE, *daughter to the gardener.*

The Scene, a country ſeat belonging to the Marchioneſs.

THE INQUISITIVE GIRL.

The inquisitive are the funnels of conversation; they do not take in any thing for their own use, but merely to pass it to another. *Spectator.* T.

ACT I.

SCENE the First.

The Stage represents a Garden.

SOPHIA, PAULINA.

Paulina. SISTER, dear Sophia, I intreat you—

Soph. Once more, all this teazing is useless, I know not of any secret.

Pau. What, Sophia, can you, who are naturally so sincere, maintain a falsehood with so much assurance?

Soph. A falſehood! that's a mild expreſſion!

Pau. It is juſt, however.

Soph. No, for you always confound imprudence with openneſs, and make a virtue of a fault. To deceive from intereſt, vanity, or joke, is to lye; but firmly to maintain our ignorance of a ſecret intruſted to us, is to fulfil a duty which honour enjoins, and which alone conſtitutes the ſafety of ſociety.

Pau. You do then, at length, confeſs that you are a confident? I congratulate you upon it.

Soph. I was not ſpeaking of myſelf, but in general terms.

Pau. Oh, mighty well; this was only a remonſtrance in form of a definition.

Soph. Let us change the converſation, Paulina; I ſee you are going to be angry.

Pau. Have I not cauſe? I am your ſiſter, I love you, tell you all I know; and you have no confidence in me.

Soph. My dear Paulina, you have an excellent heart, and a thouſand good qualities, but—

Pau. But I am inquiſitive, is not that the caſe? Why yes, I confeſs it; and the reaſon, is this: I have not your calmneſs, your indifference, but ſet infinite value on the ſmalleſt circumſtances which can intereſt thoſe whom I love; therefore, I wiſh to know, I wiſh to diſcover all which concerns them. Had I leſs ſenſibility, I ſhould be perfect in your eyes; for then, believe me, I ſhould have no curioſity.

Soph. Still, ſiſter, I daily ſee your curioſity exerciſed indiſcriminately on every object which preſents itſelf.

Pau. Yes, heretofore. Oh! I grant, that in my childhood this cenſure would have been juſt.

Soph.

Soph. But it is little more than a fortnight ſince Roſe, the gardener's daughter, was to have been married; ſhe intruſted me with the ſecret; it was neceſſary for my mother to bring over the young man's relations, who had another match in view, and that the affair, till then, ſhould be kept cloſe; however, you, by your induſtry, diſcovered it; the ſecret was divulged, and the marriage failed.

Pau. Indeed, I was to blame on that occaſion, but I did not foreſee what has happened.

Soph. You certainly never intend to be malicious, I am very ſure of it; but an exceſs of curioſity, ſiſter, always produces the moſt dangerous indiſcretions. My mother has told you this ſo many times!

Pau. That you might ſpare yourſelf the trouble of repeating it. But to return to what we were juſt now ſaying; I proteſt, I only wiſh to know your ſecret, becauſe I have diſcovered that it concerns you perſonally. For, as to mere curioſity, I am reclaimed—abſolutely reclaimed.

Soph. You affirm, therefore, I ought to believe you. Well, ſiſter, make yourſelf eaſy. If it be true that I know a ſecret, I can aſſure you, it does not concern me.

Pau. If it be true—but ſpeak plainly, do you know one, or do you not?

Soph. What does it ſignify to you? ſince the aſſurance I give muſt deſtroy that uneaſineſs which was only occaſioned by your friendſhip for me.

Pau. At length then, I may be certain that this ſecret does not concern you.

Soph. Always this ſecret—but I do not by any means confeſs, that I know one; quite otherwiſe, for I deny it.

Pau. Yet every thing contradicts you. I have eyes! and ever ſince laſt night have I not ſeen all your whiſperings with my couſin? Then, when I appeared, what ſigns! what looks! and, moreover, what embaraſſment I occaſioned!—Come, I am certain you are, even at this moment, waiting for Conſtance; I incommode you by ſtaying here; you have been ſhort with me, you have reprimanded, and lectured me, in order to drive me away; but I will keep my ground, I forewarn you of it. (*In a ſcoffing tone.*) My dear little ſiſter, I love you too well to be abſent from you, and am determined I will not leave you one inſtant the whole day.

Soph. (*Aſide.*) What patience is neceſſary! (*Aloud.*) Do you think, Paulina, that ſuch behaviour can induce people to treat you with much confidence?

Pau. But you quite tire my patience. Yes, you afflict me, you are ſo ungrateful.

Soph. Ah, Paulina, how unjuſt you are!

Pau. In ſhort, you prefer Conſtance to me; you make her your confident, and I, though your ſiſter, and older than ſhe is, am only conſidered by you both as a troubleſome, impertinent, third perſon; is not this cruel?

Soph. Had you leſs curioſity, leſs indiſcretion, ſiſter, I never ſhould have concealed any thing from you; but the confidence you demand, you have ſo frequently betrayed—

Pau. I repeat to you, I am altered; try me, intruſt me with your ſecret.

Soph. Charming! and do you pretend to be no longer inquiſitive?

Pau. I joke—and if you took it into your head this moment to tell me your ſecret, I declare, I would pay no attention to it. Beſides, if I am deſirous

ſirous of knowing it, I ſhall ſucceed in ſpite of you: my gueſſes are ſometimes right; you may recollect that.

Soph. I alſo recollect to have ſeen your penetration fail more than once.

Pau. I have a *preſſentiment* that it will be of great ſervice to me in the preſent inſtance.—For example, I would lay a wager, there is a wedding in agitation. Here are three of us to be married, you, my couſin, and myſelf; now, it is my buſineſs to find out which is the perſon in queſtion.

Soph. What, and if you were the perſon, do you think it would be concealed from you, and that you would be the only one of the three kept in ignorance?

Pau. Oh, yes, I am certain of it: my mother would intruſt you with the whole affair before ſhe ſpoke to me, and I ſhould not be told till it was quite ſettled.

Soph. Ah! Paulina, what reflexions muſt this certainty occaſion you to make! what ſevere juſtice you render to yourſelf! Why, when convinced that you inſpire ſo injurious, ſo humiliating a diſtruſt, why does not this induce you to conquer your faults?

Pau. So, ſo; you own that I have almoſt gueſſed.

Soph. Gueſſed what?

Pau. About this wedding.

Soph. How, ſiſter, do you think you are going to be married?

Pau. You gave me to underſtand ſo.

Soph. I?

Pau. True, indeed, you are my elder ſiſter—though only by one year.—Hah! a thought ſtrikes me, perhaps we are both going to be married at the ſame time.

Soph.

Soph. Undoubtedly, and Conſtance too; three weddings in one day; this is the ſecret; you have diſcovered it.

Pau. You rally; but there is a wedding in the wind, that is certain. This Baron de Sénanges, who came yeſterday, and whom we never ſaw here before, you will not, for inſtance, deny his being in the ſecret?—His long conferences with my mother, his inattention, his thoughtfulneſs, every thing proves it—nevertheleſs, he is very melancholy and very old.—I ſuppoſe he himſelf does not think of marrying—but he has a ſon, perhaps—or, at leaſt, nephews. Aye, I ſhall unravel all this. Oh, that my brother were but here! he loves me—he never kept ſecrets from me! Well, he will ſoon return from his regiment.—What is the matter, Sophia? you are thoughtful, you do not attend.

Soph. I have no anſwer to make to all the fooliſh things you have been ſaying for this laſt hour.

Pau. Fooliſh things!—you only are ſenſible, at leaſt, you think ſo.—Yes, you eſteem yourſelf a little model of perfection—and then, when you have preached a long while in a very ſententious tone, you obſerve a diſdainful ſilence, and not one word more can be drawn from you. Oh, you are moſt delightful company!

Soph. Paulina, you wiſh to exaſperate; but you will do no more than afflict me, by acting ſo wrong yourſelf, which, through friendſhip for you, I cannot ſee without extreme ſorrow.

Pau. I know not how you manage it, but you always diſcover the ſecret of being in the right.

Soph. You, who love ſecrets ſo much, ought to learn that; I do not flatter myſelf with poſ-

ſeſſing

ſeſſing it, but ſtill, I would prefer it to every other.

Pau. Oh, Sophia, if you loved me better, how much ſhould I admire you!—Somebody is coming—hah! it is Conſtance.

SCENE II.

SOPHIA, PAULINA, CONSTANCE.

Conſtance enters haſtily, and ſays:

SOPHIA—*(Then ſeeing Paulina, ſhe ſtops. A ſhort ſilence enſues, during which time Paulina looks attentively at the other two.)*

Soph. (*To Conſtance.*) Were you looking for us, Conſtance?

Pau. Yes, ſhe is charmed at finding us together—that is painted on her countenance.

Conſ. Why ſhould you think otherwiſe, Paulina? you muſt be well aſſured I love you both alike.

Pau. Moſt undoubtedly. When confidence is eſtabliſhed as between us three, if one is abſent, the two others wiſh for, or ſeek her company. This is what my ſiſter and I were going to do, when you came; but now we are met, we will have a comfortable chat together; well, let us ſit down. [*She draws a bench.*

Soph. (*Low to Conſtance.*) We muſt diſſemble.

Conſ. (*Low to Sophia.*) We ſhall never find an opportunity to read this letter—*She ſtops, becauſe Paulina turns her head, and looks at them.*)

Pau. So, I catch you at it already.

Soph. At what?

Pau.

Pau. At ſpeaking low.—Really this is not to be borne—and I muſt ſay, that from two ladies, ſo prudent, ſo diſcreet, ſo perfect, a little more politeneſs might reaſonably be expected; but I will importune you no farther, I am going to leave the coaſt clear. Adieu, Sophia, I will never again incommode you. I will hereafter ſhun you, ſince that is my only means of pleaſing.

Soph. My dear Paulina, how unkind you are! ſtay, I conjure you.

Pau. No, ſiſter, no—yet, to ſpeak the truth, I act very contrary to my own inclination.—Were I to remain, you would provoke me, and ſtill, I would rather be provoked to the utmoſt, than go away: but we muſt learn to overcome ourſelves. Adieu. [*She goes away haſtily.*

SCENE III.

SOPHIA, CONSTANCE.

They remain ſilent for a moment, till they have loſt ſight of Paulina.

Conſ. AT length, ſhe is gone.

Soph. Yes, but I am afraid ſhe will ſoon return.

Conſ. Beſides, ſhe would not at all ſcruple hiding herſelf in order to over-hear our converſation.

Soph. Go very ſoftly and look. Alas, what a torment is the indiſpenſable neceſſity of taking ſo many precautions againſt a perſon we love!

Conſ. (*Returning.*) Now you may be eaſy; I found Roſe at the entrance of the grove, and charged her to inform us when ſhe ſaw Paulina.

Soph.

Soph. But this is telling Roſe we have a ſecret.

Conſ. By no means—Roſe is ſo ſimple! I told her, laughing, that this was a joke; ſhe believes it, and the rather, becauſe we have already often ſet her on the watch for trifles. We are, at leaſt, ſure that Paulina will not come and ſurprize us.—Let us loſe no time, dear Sophia.

Soph. I told you laſt night, that I had juſt received a letter from my brother, that I had read it, and that he gave me permiſſion to communicate the contents to you.

Conſ. Did the ſteward bring you this letter?

Soph. Yes, here it is, I will read it; alas, my dear Conſtance!—

Conſ. Sophia, you are in tears.——Speak, what has happened?

Soph. If you knew all I have ſuffered ſince yeſterday, and how dear it has coſt me to appear as eaſy and cheerful as uſual!—Attend to this letter, you may then judge yourſelf—but ſee whether Roſe be ſtill there.

Conſ. I am going.

Soph. Oh, brother, brother!—what will be the end of this unhappy event?

Conſ. (*Returning.*) Roſe is there; Paulina is not in ſight; let us take advantage of this favourable moment; read, my dear Sophia; alleviate or complete the dreadful uneaſineſs I feel.

Soph. Alas, what am I going to tell you! (*She opens the letter.*) It is dated Thurſday morning.

Conſ. What, yeſterday!—why, M. de Valcour's regiment is forty-five leagues off; how could you receive his letter the ſame day?

Soph.

Soph. Ah! Conſtance, my brother is no longer with his regiment; he is here.

Conſ. Here!

Soph. Huſh! do not ſpeak ſo loud; if we ſhould be heard—Yes, he is concealed in this houſe; but attend to his letter, that will acquaint you with every thing. (*She caſts her eye over it, and then reads out, but in a low voice, looking frequently, with uneaſineſs, to ſee whether any body is coming.*) Hem—ah—"Let us come to the particulars of my unfortunate adventure.—You know the Marquis de Valcé's regiment is thirty leagues diſtant from the city in which I am, and you are acquainted with the friendſhip which unites me to Valcé: a letter from one of our joint friends informed me, that he had loſt a conſiderable ſum of money at play, and was in deep diſtreſs; wiſhing, without delay, to fly to his aſſiſtance, I ordered my *valet-de-chambre* to ſpread the report of my being ill, that I might be excuſed from duty, and I ſet out immediately, intending to return in two days at fartheſt."—You ſee my brother in this affair.

Conſ. Oh, this *trait* deſcribes his ſoul!

Soph. That an act ſo noble, ſhould have ſuch fatal conſequences!—But, let us proceed. (*She reads.*) "As I went away without leave, I took the precaution of changing my name, and arrived at Vallenciennes under that of the Chevalier de Mirville. On entering the city, I could not think without emotion, my dear Sophia, of being no more than fifteen leagues from my mother and ſiſters"—I cannot reſtrain my tears.

Conſ. Give it to me, I will read. (*She takes the letter.*)

Soph.

Soph. Huſh! I hear a noiſe.

Conſ. It is Roſe.

Soph. Oh, return my letter!—(*She takes the letter, and puts it in her pocket.*)

Roſe enters haſtily with an air of ſecrecy, and paſſing by Sophia, ſays: Mademoiſelle, Paulina is at my heels. (*She then croſſes the ſtage, and goes out on the oppoſite ſide.*)

Soph. Was ever any thing ſo unlucky!—

Conſ. Let us retire to our room.

Soph. Paulina will follow us there too.—But here ſhe is: let us change the converſation.

SCENE IV.

SOPHIA, CONSTANCE, PAULINA.

(*Paulina advances a few paces, and then ſtops.*)

Conſ. FOR my part, I like the Engliſh gardens better.

Soph. Well, I think they only imitate nature in a niggardly way, and—

Paul. (*Coming forward.*) Your pardon: I interrupt, what appears to me, a very lively and intereſting diſpute.

Conſ. No, not at all, we were talking of gardens.

Pau. Yes, and dreading leſt ſo important a diſcourſe ſhould be interrupted, you ſtationed a ſentinel at the entrance of the grove.

Soph. What do you mean?

Pau. Roſe was not there juſt now? I did not ſee her run poſt-haſte to inform you of my arrival?—Sophia, Conſtance, you are both very prudent,

prudent, but you want contrivance; really you do, I cannot help telling you ſo. Try to be ſomewhat more artful in your little intrigues, otherwiſe I ſhall conſtantly diſcover them.

Conſ. Why, what have you diſcovered now?

Pau. That you have a ſecret; but of what ſort remains to be found out, and for this, I only aſk the reſt of the day; in the evening, I will acquaint you with it. Oh, truſt me, you ſhall not be kept in ſuſpenſe. Come, to begin. Firſt, by examining your looks with attention, I can nearly gueſs the nature of your ſecret; you were talking of it juſt this moment, for it is impoſſible you ſhould think me duped by your Engliſh garden. Now, for a little view of the impreſſion which remains on your faces.

Soph. Paulina, you will ſee nothing on mine, but the ſhame I feel for you, on finding to what an exceſs you are hurried by a curioſity ſo culpable.

Pau. In what an indignant manner you ſpeak! alas! then it is not enough to refuſe me your confidence; you deſpiſe me, Sophia.—Well, if I do not poſſeſs your virtues, I may acquire them; I am young, I may reform; ſiſter, have you loſt that hope?—Anſwer me—oh, calm my fears!

Soph. Who can be incorrigible with ſo good a heart?

Pau. Ah, ſiſter! (*They embrace, and after a moment's ſilence Sophia ſays*:) I hope every thing from your underſtanding and reflexions, dear Paulina.

Pau. And I, from your example and advice.

Conſ. Somebody comes—it is my aunt, I believe.

Pau. Yes.

SCENE

SCENE V.

SOPHIA, CONSTANCE, PAULINA, THE MARCHIONESS.

Mar. (*Aſide at the farther end of the ſtage.*) THERE ſhe is, I muſt ſend the others away. (*Aloud.*) Paulina, go into the ſaloon, and receive ſome ladies who are juſt arrived, I will join you preſently. Conſtance, go with your couſin—and do you ſtay here, Sophia.

Pau. And my ſiſter—does not ſhe come with us?

Mar. That is not neceſſary—go—

Pau. But, mamma, Sophia is the elder; ſhe would do the honours better than I.

Mar. I think you capable of ſupplying her place on this occaſion.

Pau. Then you wiſh to be left alone with her?

Mar. Paulina, I could wiſh for fewer queſtions, and more obedience.

Pau. Fewer queſtions!—I have aſked but one.

Mar. I forbid your aſking a ſecond, or ſtaying a moment longer.

Pau. (*Aſide in going.*) How hard this is! I am quite in deſpair. (*She goes away, Conſtance follows her.*)

SCENE

SCENE VI.

THE MARCHIONESS, SOPHIA.

Mar. (Looking at Paulina as she goes away.) WHAT a diſpoſition!—what uneaſineſs ſhe gives me!—At length, my dear, we are alone; I wiſhed to talk with you; for I want to unburden my heart.

Soph. Ah, madam! I preſumed not to aſk the cauſe of your melancholy—

Mar. I am overwhelmed with grief, ſo much the more diſtreſſing, ſince I am obliged to conceal it from every eye. Your good ſenſe and diſcretion, ſo far ſuperiour to your years, authorize my confidence in you, which is boundleſs, as I ſhall prove, by revealing to you the moſt important ſecret I can ever diſcloſe.

Soph. You may, by freſh inſtances of kindneſs, increaſe my happineſs, but not my affection and gratitude. I cannot, madam, either love you better, or have a more lively ſenſe of all my obligations to you.

Mar. Ah, Sophia, what a happy mother you make me! but alas! I have only one friend, though I have two daughters.

Soph. Paulina will hereafter render herſelf worthy of ſo honourable, ſo dear a title.

Mar. Heaven grant ſhe may!—But let us return to the ſecret I wiſh to impart; it will afflict you deeply, my dear Sophia.

Soph. Am not I prepared for it, ſince I ſee how it afflicts you.

Mar.

Mar. This ſecret concerns your brother.

Soph. *(Aſide.)* I know it but too well. *(Aloud.)* Go on, madam!

Mar. I ſhall begin by telling you he is in health and ſafety; his ſtory, in a few words, is this: about twelve days ago he left his regiment without leave, being ſummoned by friendſhip to Valenciennes, at which place he went under a borrowed name; he was led by ill-fortune to an inn where the Marquis de Sénanges then was, and the very evening of his arrival they had a diſpute ſo violent, that it ended in a determination to fight the next morning.

Soph. Good heaven!

Mar. In ſhort, at break of day they both ſet out on horſeback, in order to go and fight on the frontier. Oh, my dear Sophia! how ſhall I tell you? your brother, after having received a deep and dangerous wound, made a terrible lunge at his adverſary; he ſaw him ſtagger, and, bathed in blood, at length fall at his feet; he thought the Marquis dead, and he himſelf, ſcarcely able to ſtand, crawled towards his horſe, and ſoon collecting his little remains of ſtrength, left the fatal ſpot. This dreadful ſcene happened on the frontier, and conſequently four leagues from hence.

Soph. Alas, ſo near us!

Mar. My ſon, being quite at the extremity of the kingdom, deſigned to leave it; but in half an hour, exhauſted by loſs of blood, he was obliged to ſtop, and ſit down at the foot of a tree, where he ſoon entirely loſt the uſe of his ſenſes. At that inſtant, Providence brought to the very ſpot, the faithful Thibaut my ſteward, whoſe attachment you well know.

Soph. Ah! could heaven forſake the ſon of the moſt

moſt affectionate, the beſt of mothers?—We owe all its bleſſings to your virtues.

Mar. In you, my dear, I find its greateſt bleſſing, ſince from that heart ſo pure, ſo tender, I derive the trueſt felicity I can enjoy; and the only conſolation of which I am ſuſceptible. But let us now reſume a melancholy topic, which we may not, perhaps, be able to mention again before the evening.

Soph. Did Thibaut bring my brother hither?

Mar. He was fortunately alone in a covered chaiſe, in which he placed my ſon, who remained ſenſeleſs; and, taking a by-road, he carried him to his own mother's, at the entrance of the village; and, when all my family were in bed, came to inform me of this tragical event. I ran to my unhappy ſon: Thibaut, and the houſehold-ſurgeon, removed him into one of the rooms belonging to my apartment, where I ſat up with him ſeven nights; during which time he was in the utmoſt danger.

Soph. And I have not partaken of theſe dear, theſe afflictive cares!—But is my brother, at length, perfectly recovered?

Mar. He is, at leaſt, able to go away without danger.

Soph. How! is he going away?

Mar. Alas! he muſt. Judge, my dear, of the extreme embarraſſment in which I am involved; this Baron de Sénanges, who came yeſterday, is father to the unhappy young man whom your brother has too certainly bereaved of life!

Soph. Is he unacquainted with this fatal event?

Mar. Thanks to heaven, he only knows a part of the truth. He was informed by a letter, that his ſon and the Chevalier de Mirville went out

haſtily together; that, according to the depoſitions of the people belonging to the inn, they had quarrelled violently, and never been heard of from that time; therefore, it was but too probable, they were gone away ſo precipitately in order to fight. It was added that my ſon had been the aggreſſor. On hearing this dreadful news, the Baron de Sénanges, naturally as impetuous as he is ſuſceptible, experienced reſentment equal to his grief; and wrote to the commandants of the frontier towns, to learn whether the Chevalier de Mirville was gone into a foreign country, and to ſtop his flight, if it were not too late.

Soph. Thus, from want of knowing my brother's real name, he purſues a phantom.

Mar. But this name, the concealment of which is ſo important to us, he may diſcover; his fortune, rank and character, render him the moſt formidable, the moſt dangerous of enemies!

Soph. But what motive brought him hither?

Mar. He came to this province in the hope of gaining ſome information concerning the fate of his ſon, who, as he ſuppoſes, fought on the frontier; and as my eſtate lies on the frontier, and he knew me formerly, theſe circumſtances determined him to come to my houſe.—Think what I muſt have felt at his appearance!—He has told me every particular of this dreadful ſtory; he talks of nothing but his grief, and ſchemes of revenge. I ſhare his troubles, I weep with him; but how bitter are my tears! it is in the boſom of a cruel enemy I ſhed them!—in the boſom of my ſon's perſecutor!—

Soph. Alas! you make me tremble.

Mar. Sometimes I venture to combat his reſentment; and then, I am undoubtedly hurried

away by too much zeal, for he views me with surprize; his astonished looks terrify me; I think I have just betrayed myself, that I have named my son.—In short, for the last twenty-four hours, I have felt all the most cruel and afflictive sensations which restraint, terrour, and compassion, can excite. But, alas! the unfortunate man, who gives me so much anxiety, is more to be pitied than I am!

Soph. Unhappy Baron! he imagines that revenge would console him!

Mar. He is certainly mistaken; if the human heart can really be so far misled as to thirst for revenge, still, is there any person barbarous enough to satiate such a thirst without horrour?—This shocking gratification of cowardly and savage minds, degrades him who gives himself up to it, and dooms him to eternal remorse.

Soph. Then, will my brother soon leave us, madam?—

Mar. This very night.

Soph. But those orders given to the commandants of the frontier towns?

Mar. They only concern the Chevalier de Mitville; my son is known, and cannot be confounded with a young man, who bears a different name, and is only described as an adventurer. These reflexions ought to calm my fears; but still, I tremble; direful forebodings pursue and overwhelm me;—should the Baron de Sénanges be positively informed of his son's death, should he discover the asylum, and real name of his enemy, good heaven! to what excess might he not be driven by a furious despair!

Soph. Oh, madam! you freeze me with terrour.

Mar.

Mar. I have taken every precaution which a mother's prudence could suggest. I have forbidden the admittance of any ſtranger into the houſe. Thibaut told me, that a man came this morning and aſked, whether the Baron de Sénanges were here. Thibaut, without heſitating, anſwered, no; The ſame man, two hours after, returned, better informed, and ſaid, he would abſolutely ſpeak to the Baron, and ſee him alone; but refuſed to tell his name. Thibaut again ſent him away, aſſuring him, that he could not ſpeak with the Baron till to-morrow evening; my ſon will then be out of France.

Soph. This man, who conceals himſelf, makes me uneaſy; and I remember, that when I was walking this morning with my governeſs and Paulina, in the little wood, I ſaw a man rambling about, who obſerved us, but ſeemed deſirous of avoiding our notice. I could not ſee his face, a ſlouched hat intirely hid it.

Mar. What, did he follow you?

Soph. Yes, but always at a diſtance. We ſat down; and having loſt ſight of him, were converſing quietly, till, about half an hour afterwards, I heard a ruſtling of leaves behind me, and, turning my head, ſaw this ſame man with his back to us, running away full-ſpeed.

Mar. He had been liſtening, without doubt.

Soph. We thought ſo, and immediately came in.

Mar. This is certainly the perſon whom Thibaut mentioned to me.—What does ſuch myſterious conduct mean?—But let us join the Baron de Sénanges, and not leave him again.—Oh, that the night were come! what a day!—But I hear ſomebody!

Soph. It is Roſe.

Mar. What does ſhe want with us?

SCENE VII.

THE MARCHIONESS, SOPHIA, ROSE.

Rose. MADAM!

Mar. Well?

Rose. M. Thibaut wants you, madam.

Mar. Where is he?

Rose. In the great yard.

Mar. Let us go thither immediately; come, Sophia; (*Aside as she goes away.*) Alas, every thing perplexes and disturbs me!

[*Rose makes several signs to Sophia to persuade her to stay; Sophia does not seem to observe them, but goes away with the Marchioness.*

SCENE VIII.

Rose. (*Alone.*) ALL my signs are useless; she does not even take notice of them.—Zooks! I need not make half so many to detain mademoiselle Paulina! Oh, but then she is inquisitive; she has made me so too; it is catching seemingly. What the deuce shall I do with this here letter?—(*She takes a letter out of her pocket and reads the direction.*) "To mademoiselle de Valcour."—Oh, it is for the eldest, that is a sure thing.—She would not stay, I could have told her all this. (*She puts the letter again into her pocket.*) I have a good mind to know what's in the letter.—This young man too, and especially this money.—It all staggers me.—(*She takes a purse out of her pocket.*) Twelve guineas!—that's I can't tell how many shillings. Somebody's coming. My stars! let's pop away the purse and the letter in a minute.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

PAULINA, ROSE.

Pau. ROSE—but what are you doing there?

Roſe. Nothing, mademoiſelle.

Pau. How red you look!

Roſe. Aye, it is ſo hot!

Pau. You were hiding ſomething in your pocket: I ſaw you.—Why this myſtery? My dear Roſe, have you no longer any friendſhip for me?

Roſe. Lookye, you are going to pump me, I ſee that.

Pau. Pray tell me the truth; and, I give you my word of honour, I will not act imprudently.

Roſe. That, mayhap, is a matter too hard for you—do you remember how you hindered my marrying?

Pau. Come, I will atone for that; I promiſe to make your fortune.

Roſe. Oh, my fortune, that's in a fair way. Zooks! why I am richer than I could wiſh, for it makes me uneaſy.

Pau. What are you ſaying? prithee explain yourſelf.

Roſe. Well, I'm wheedled into it; I muſt e'en tell you every thing.

Pau. (Embracing her.) How I do love you, Roſe!

Roſe. I am going to relate a comical ſtory.

Pau. Make haſte then.

Roſe. Zooks, it is juſt ſuch an adventure as there is in that green book, which the Mar-

chioneſs deſired you not to read, and which you ſtole.

Pau. But to the point, Roſe.

Roſe. In ſhort, it is like a romance.

Pau. (*Aſide.*) How ſhe tires my patience. (*Aloud.*) Come, Roſe, do proceed.

Roſe. This is it: I was a walking juſt now in the avenue, when all on a ſudden a man approached me; he was quite muffled up in his hat and great coat; but for all that, he ſeemed young. "Do you belong to the Caſtle?" ſays he. "Yes, Sir," ſays I. "Well, give this letter to mademoiſelle de Valcour, and take that for yourſelf," ſays he, "and I will give you ſomething more if you are prudent."

Pau. Oh, this is the very man we ſaw in the morning. Well, Roſe, what was your anſwer?

Roſe. Why, nothing; bleſs ye, I had not time to ſay one word. Well, he leaves me a letter, a purſe, and off he was again in a crack; while I, quite in amaze, counted the money, and then put it in my pocket with the letter. This is all.

Pau. And you have got the letter?

Roſe. To be ſure I have.

Pau. Come, let me ſee it.

Roſe. Yes, with all my heart; but you cannot read it, however, for it is ſealed: look, here 'tis.

Pau. (*Reading the direction.*) "To mademoiſelle de Valcour." Is it directed to my ſiſter, or me?

Roſe. Oh, to mademoiſelle Sophia, I'd anſwer for that.

Pau. Why?

Roſe. You know Mary Joan, the farmer's wife?

Pau.

Pau. Well!

Roſe. She ſells wine.

Pau. What then?

Roſe. Why two days ago, a young man came to her houſe for a pint; but, inſtead of drinking it, he ſpent the whole time in aſking queſtions about mademoiſelle de Valcour; the talleſt, and ſhe who looks ſo modeſt: theſe were his words. Mary Joan, ſaid the handſomeſt thing of her; for ſhe loves mademoiſelle Sophia, that's a ſure thing—and then, indeed, every body thinks the ſame of her.

Pau. Well, but the young man—did not he aſk one queſtion about me?

Roſe. No, it was all about her who looks ſo modeſt; you was not mentioned—you ſee it is plain enough, that this is the man who gave me the letter, at leaſt, it certainly ſeems ſo.

Pau. (*Sorrowfully.*) Roſe, I muſt carry this letter to my mother—though it were for me, I ought not to open it—therefore, I ſhall always remain ignorant of the contents.

Roſe. Perhaps, for your good behaviour, my lady will tell you what is in it; this is the way mademoiſelle Sophia gets every thing told to her.

Pau. I only want to know whether the letter is ſigned.—'Tis a ſingular adventure; has it any relation to the ſecret which engroſſes my mother Sophia, and Conſtance?

Roſe. Then you ſuſpect there is a ſecret in the wind?

Pau. Have you diſcovered any thing about it, Roſe?

Roſ. Faith, perhaps there is nobody in the houſe, except us two, who is kept in ignorance;

you, mademoiſelle, becauſe of your curioſity, and I, becauſe it is perceived that you make me chatter as much as you pleaſe. But howſomever, I have caught hold on ſome little matter.—

Pau. Ah! what is that?

Roſe. I will tell you, on this condition though, that, if you open the letter, you ſhall read it to me.

Pau. Fie, fie, I will not open it.

Roſe. Pſhaw, you'll break that reſolution. Ah, I know you.

Pau. Then you have a very bad opinion of me, Roſe?

Roſe. Pray, mademoiſelle, pardon me—but after all I have hitherto ſeen of your behaviour—

Pau. I have ſuffered myſelf to be hurried into ſome inconſiderate things, but I hope I am incapable of committing ſo ſerious a fault.—For a girl of my age ſecretly to open the letter of a young man, and a ſtranger—nay, a letter, which in all appearance, is deſigned for another perſon—Alas, if curioſity could ſo far miſlead us, would there exiſt a fault more dangerous, more horrid?

Roſe. Be eaſy, mademoiſelle; come, we will not read it; I'll e'en tell you all I know without that.

Pau. Make haſte then, for it is almoſt dinner-time.

Roſe. Yeſterday evening, as my lady was walking in the flower garden with this Baron, I paſſed by, and heard him ſay: "The Chevalier de Mirville;" and then they talked quite low, quite low indeed; howſomever, I remembered this name, becauſe I had before heard M. Thibaut mention it once, though he ſpoke in a whiſper; it was to the houſehold-ſurgeon, at the bottom of the ſtaircaſe,

caſe, while I was hid behind the folding door.

Pau. The Chevalier de Mirville—that name is totally unknown to me.

Roſe. And then at the ſame time, the ſurgeon added I know not what words; theſe I caught:—"What a ſurprize, if it ſhould be known that he is concealed here!"

Pau. Did you hear that?

Roſe. Yes, with both ears—but this is all I could make out.

Pau. And a great deal too. It is plain that the Chevalier de Mirville is concealed here—but why?—And the Baron de Sénanges knows it, ſince he mentioned him.—Surely the Baron is his uncle, or, perhaps, his father.—But this myſtery is incomprehenſible; I would give the world to find it out.

Roſe. And ſo would I too, I promiſe you.

Pau. Well, we, at leaſt, know the Chevalier de Mirville is concealed here—this is ſomething gained, and enough to diſcover the reſt before night.—(*She looks at her watch.*) But it is juſt two o'clock, we are going to dinner. Good-b'ye, Roſe; I thank you for your confidence; you may be certain I ſhall not abuſe it.—Do not follow me, it is needleſs for us to be ſeen together, go away on the other ſide.

Roſe. That's well thought of; we muſt be prudent. [*They go away.*

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE the Firſt.

PAULINA, *alone.*

ROSE is not here; where can ſhe be?—I am avoided by every body, ſhunned by my mother; I could not find an opportunity of ſpeaking with her apart, in order to give her this letter.—I am equally troubleſome to my mother, ſiſter, and couſin, and reduced to take for a confident, for a friend, a little country girl, without education, without principles; to whom I have imparted my own faults, and from whom I only receive bad advice!—Alas, I am very unhappy!

[*She muſes.*

SCENE

SCENE II.

PAULINA, ROSE.

Roſe. (*Running.*) MADEMOISELLE, mademoiſelle!

Pau. What's the matter?

Roſe. I have juſt made a fine diſcovery! I have learned in what part of the houſe this Chevalier de Mirville is concealed.

Pau. Indeed!—and how?

Roſe. You know my lady's great room at the end of the gallery?

Pau. Well!

Roſe. He is hid there.

Pau. Do you think ſo?

Roſ. I'd venture a wager of it.—I had my ſuſpicions before, 'cauſe the keys of the gallery and room were both taken away; and nevertheleſs my lady was always creepng about there, with the ſurgeon, and the ſteward.—I juſt now aſked the *frotteur* * whether he went into the room as uſual; but he ſaid, he had not been there above this week paſſed, my lady having forbid it. So you ſee plainly, the hiding place is quite found out.

Pau. This is inconceivable!—what can all theſe precautions mean?

Roſe. Oh, 'tis vaſt odd, indeed! I vow I am quite at a ſtand about it.

Pau. My curioſity is excited to the utmoſt, I muſt confeſs.

* A perſon who rubs the floors and grates; and whoſe place anſwers, in ſome degree, to that of our houſemaids. T.

Roſ. And for my part, it abſolutely makes me pine away. Oh, now I think of it, mademoiſelle, have you given the letter to my lady?

Pau. No, indeed; for mamma, who always imagines I want to aſk queſtions, would not hear me; ſhe repulſes, ſhuns me, in order to ſhut herſelf up with my ſiſter and couſin.

Roſe. Well, we have got the letter, at leaſt—is it ſtill in your pocket?

Pau. Yes, here it is.

Roſe. One may ſometimes read letters without breaking the ſeal.

Pau. 'Tis uſeleſs to peep at this, nothing can be ſeen.

Roſe. So, ſo; you have been peeping then?

Pau. Yes, from inadvertency.

Roſe. For my part I never miſs, I play this trick every time I take a letter to the poſt, it always amuſes me by the way; but unluckily, I cannot read writing very well.

Pau. I am much perplexed; I know not what to do with this letter.

Roſe. Since my lady will not have it, 'tis our's.

Pau. Yes, but what uſe ſhall we make of it?

Roſe. The uſe of a letter, forſooth! Why you who read writing off hand, ſhall read it, and I'll liſten.

Pau. I have already told you, that I neither will, nor ought to read it.

Roſe. But, mademoiſelle, I don't underſtand nothing of theſe whimſies, not I; you have endeavoured to catch at ſomething through the paper, and had it not been for the ſeal, you would have read it five or ſix times over; now there an't any more harm in breaking this naſty little bit of wax—

Pau.

Pau. No, it is better to burn it.

Roſe. Yes, after we have ſeen the inſide; come, give it to me; I will do the buſineſs.

Pau. Nay, I don't know why I concerned myſelf with the letter; it was entruſted to you, nor is it directed to me; therefore, I have nothing at all to do in the affair.

Roſe. No more than the new-born child. True, the letter is mine, you have taken it unjuſtly.

Pau. (*Giving the letter to her.*) There, do what you pleaſe with it; I will meddle no further.

Roſe. The ſeal is a going.

Pau. You muſt look to that.

Roſe. 'Tis not badly ſtuck together.—Well, all's over, the letter's open—but how's this, mademoiſelle, you are quite ſtounded!

Pau. Roſe! Roſe! what have we done!

Roſe Come, come, we muſt read now, and not ſtand ſhilly ſhally; for ſomebody may ſurprize us.

Pau. My heart flutters—

Roſe. But do read—and aloud if you pleaſe; for I will have my ſhare.

Pau. (*Taking the letter and reading to herſelf.*) It is not ſigned.

Roſe. Pſhaw, that an't civil of him not to tell his name!—but read, let's hear what he ſays, howſomever.

Pau. I tremble—(*She reads aloud.*) "My birth and fortune, mademoiſelle, might, perhaps, entitle me to aſpire to your hand"—

Roſe. So, this is a lover!—

Pau. (*Going on.*) "But a fear leſt your family "may have entered into engagements contrary "to the wiſhes I preſume to form, reſtrains

" and prevents me from declaring myself. At " firſt, I determined to acquaint my father with " my ſentiments, but I am unwilling to do that " without your conſent, and the Marchioneſs de " Valcour's; for I know you well enough, ma- " demoiſelle, to be very certain, that this letter " will be communicated to her."—

Roſe. Aye, aye, he has reckoned without his hoſt; but then he thought the letter would be given to mademoiſelle Sophia.

Pau. Do hold your tongue. *(She goes on.)* " I " beſeech you to excuſe the raſhneſs of my pro- " ceeding; the love which has occaſioned it, " muſt ſerve for an apology; ſince it is founded " leſs on your charms, than on the reputation " you have acquired by your good-ſenſe, your " talents, and your virtues."—

Roſe. This is pretty.

Pau. *(Going on.)* " Some extraordinary cir- " cumſtances oblige me to be cautious of appear- " ing; but ſay one word, mademoiſelle, and I " will make myſelf known. If you deign to " return me an anſwer, ſend it to the hollow of " the old oak, at the end of the avenue; thither I " ſhall go this evening, to look for the ſentence " which muſt decide my fate."

Roſe. Is that all?

Pau. Yes.—What a ſtrange adventure!

Roſe. Do you make any thing out of all this?

Pau. Yes, I begin to unravel the whole plot, though there are ſtill many circumſtances which I do not underſtand. Firſt, this unknown perſon is certainly the Chevalier de Mirville, who is concealed here.

Roſe. We have already gueſſed that. But how

could he contrive to see mademoiselle Sophia, and then ramble into the village, and ask questions of Mary Joan, if he be shut up here?

Pau. Because he is not a prisoner, but has liberty to go out.

Rose. He mentions his father in the letter.

Pau. Oh, his father is the Baron de Sénanges.

Rose. But he should be called Sénanges too.

Pau. Mirville, is probably the name of an estate. I suppose they wished to make him marry Constance; but he has seen Sophia, and prefers her to my cousin.

Rose. He is not to blame, mind ye, for mademoiselle Sophia is so genteel; and then that air, so modest, so very modest, has quite struck him.

Pau. And he has taken the resolution of writing to my sister to know her intentions.

Rose. You have hit the right nail on the head, that's exactly the case.

Pau. But why conceal himself?—Sophia, and my cousin, both know he is here—perhaps, though, my mother does not wish them to see each other, till matters are quite settled.

Rose. That's it. Zooks, mademoiselle, you're so sharp!—but I'm thinking of one thing: this poor gentleman, who loves mademoiselle Sophia to his heart, will look very foolish this evening, when, instead of an answer, he only finds oak leaves in the hollow of his tree. It would be a nice trick for you to write to him.

Pau. What nonsense!

Rose. But we should, at least, see how he would look—he would come.—The deuce, why only send him some idle stuff, that's of no great consequence—there's no vast harm in that.

Pau.

Pau. Really, if he would be a good match, I ſhould rather wiſh him married to my ſiſter, than to Conſtance—beſides, he loves Sophia, he ſeems the gentleman—and did my mother know his ſentiments, I am certain ſhe would approve them.

Roſe. He is faint-hearted—without this little bit of an anſwer, he'll not ſay a ſingle word, but take himſelf off: and then good b'y to the wedding.

Pau. A droll thought comes into my head; do you write to him.

Roſe. Oh, with all my heart; but then I muſt tell you before-hand, I an't vaſt clever at writing, I can only make O's.

Pau. That does not ſignify; I will guide your hand.

Roſe. Agreed—if ſo be we had but writing things.

Pau. Hold; I have got a pencil, and ſome paper, in my pocket.

Roſ. Come, come, to work. (*She draws a chair.*) This will ſerve for a table.—Give me the paper. (*She kneels down on the ground before the chair. Paulina guides her hand.*)

Pau. Do not hold your fingers ſo ſtiff.

Roſe. Zooks, why I do that to write better.

Pau. Pho, hold your hand eaſy—let us make haſte—if any body ſhould come—

Roſe, Oh, your governeſs has got the head-ach; my miſtreſs, and the young ladies, are taken up with their ſecrets.

Pau. Well, let us begin.—(*She makes her write.*)

Roſe. Tell me how I write.—Pſhaw, that's not even.

Pau. You will not ſuffer me to guide your hand.

hand.—There, that's very well—now we have done.

Roſe. Is it finiſhed? (*They get up again.*) Let's ſee whether I can read it.—Hah! only three words!—(*She reads.*) "You———you—"

Pau. Give it to me, I'll tell you. (*She reads.*) "You may appear."

Roſe. "You may appear."—Did I write that?

Pau. Yes.

Roſe. The ſchool-maſter never made me do ſo much.—Now I will put it into the old oak.

Pau. Yes, but take great care that nobody ſees you.

Roſe. Oh, don't you fear.

Pau. Hear me, Roſe—when this young man comes, he will have an explanation with my mother and ſiſter; he will diſcover that it was not Sophia who anſwered him; he will ſay, he intruſted you with the letter—conſider, you have done it all yourſelf, and do not then lay the blame on me.

Roſe. Oh, I'll ſay that I read, that I wrote.—

Pau. Yes, but it is known that you can neither read nor write.

Roſe. I'll maintain that I have learned, that it came upon me all at once.

Pau. Give me back the note.

Roſe. Don't you believe it: 'tis for the old oak.

Pau. Give it me back, I dread the conſequence of all this.

Roſe No, mademoiſelle, I ſhall not alter my mind, I want to ſee the gentleman.

Pau. How, Roſe, when I aſk you for a thing—

Roſe. 'Tis in vain to put on thoſe commanding airs.

Pau.

Soph. (*Fearfully.*) What, do they relate to your imaginary diſcovery?

Pau. Oh, not at all.

Soph. (*Aſide.*) I revive, ſhe knows nothing.

Pau. In ſhort, there will ſoon be no ſecret; and he, who hides himſelf to day, will appear to-morrow without myſtery.

Soph. (*Speaking in an agitated manner.*) He who hides himſelf!

Conſ. (*Low to Sophia.*) Alas, ſhould ſhe know it!

Pau. Hah, you are both diſturbed.—I cannot forbear laughing at their aſtoniſhed looks.

Soph. (*Low to Conſtance.*) Her cheerfulneſs proves her ignorance; ſtill, what does ſhe mean?

Pau. I ſhall be very glad to ſee him—however, it is not me whom he chooſes for a confident, it is not to me his letters are addreſſed.—Good heaven! ſhe is going to be ill—how pale ſhe looks!—Sophia!—ſupport her.—(*She runs to her.*)

Soph. Leave me!—Oh! if you really knew—but no, her heart is good—could ſhe make a jeſt of it?—Paulina, for pity's ſake explain yourſelf!

Pau. Into what aſtoniſhment you throw me in your turn—Sophia ready to faint—Conſtance pale and trembling. Ah, what can be the cauſe of this dreadful confuſion?—what have I ſaid?

Soph. (*Aſide.*) She is ignorant of our ſecret, and I have betrayed myſelf.

Pau. Sophia, you cannot reſtrain your tears, and it is I who make them flow. Ah, ſiſter! this idea diſtracts me. Why ſuch exceſſive grief? could you ſuſpect me of being jealous?—Oh, my heart is incapable of that. Its fondeſt, its ſincereſt wiſhes, are for Sophia's happineſs.—I will no longer deceive you; no, ſiſter, I am only half informed;

formed; and, without doubt, we neither of us juſt now underſtood the other. Be calm, and anſwer me.

Soph. (Aſide.) I muſt, at leaſt, endeavour to make amends for my imprudence. *(To Paulina.)* Well, I confeſs, we are taken up with a ſecret. At length, Paulina, you have gone ſo far as to extort this confeſſion from me, though it ought never to have paſſed my lips; but diſcretion and proper reſerve, are virtues not to be retained in your preſence.

Pau. What bitterneſs there is in this reproach! do you anſwer thus to friendſhip?

Soph. You love me, yet make me fail in my duties.—But no more of that, I neither wiſh to diſpleaſe, nor offend you; but will only ſay, it was ſurprize alone which cauſed the emotion you were witneſs to; you told me you knew all, in a manner ſo ſincere, that I believed it, and—

Pau. Then the particulars I related have ſome reference to your ſecret?

Soph. I did not hear thoſe particulars, my emotion hindered me from comprehending them. However, I can aſſure you, the ſecret with which I am intruſted has nothing important or ſingular in it.—I think I diſcover that you are miſinformed. If you will explain yourſelf openly—

Pau. Should I be wrong, would you tell me the truth?

Soph. Perhaps—

Pau. Perhaps, does not ſatisfy me. No, I have not any claim to your confidence, nor ſhould I obtain it; you have declared that too harſhly for me to doubt on the point; therefore, remain uneaſy, you ſhall not be informed of my ſecret.

Soph. Should my mother aſk it, you muſt tell her.

Pau.

Pau. Threats! do not use such means, they disgrace you, and have no influence over me.

Conf. Ought Sophia to keep my aunt in ignorance respecting faults which a mother's authority alone could repress?

Pau. I have only one word to say; you may inform against me, you may deliver me up to my mother's anger, and reduce me to despair—but force and violence will gain nothing.

Soph. Foolish girl! would not the sacred authority of a mother oblige you to reveal a secret, which you will, perhaps, without hesitation, tell to the first person who may ask you—nay, for aught I know, to Rose, the gardener's daughter, if she urges for it? Oh, sister, how you abuse the virtues which nature has implanted in your mind! no principle rules, no reflexion directs them, and they serve but to mislead you.—However, calm your fears, for my mother shall not learn from me, what she ought to obtain only from your repentance and confidence.

Pau. (*Aside.*) How she makes me blush for those faults with which she reproaches me, and for those of which she is ignorant!

Conf. Night is coming on—we must go in; besides, it looks like a storm.—I hear somebody—it is Rose; what does she want with us?

SCENE V.

PAULINA, CONSTANCE, SOPHIA, ROSE.

Rose. LADIES, my mistress sends me to tell you, that she shall not sit down to table, but sup in her own room, because she wishes to go to bed early.

Pau.

Pau. Is she ill then?
Rose. I believe so, for she is much altered.
Pau. Let us go and enquire about it.
Soph. We will follow you.
Pau. Come. [*She goes away, Rose follows her.*

SCENE VI.

SOPHIA, CONSTANCE.

Soph. (*stopping Constance.*) STAY, Constance, my mother is not ill; she wishes to avoid sitting down to supper, that the family may be sooner in bed.

Cons. Why your brother does not go away till two in the morning.

Soph. True, but my mother has permitted me to take leave of him. You shall come likewise, Constance; and, that we may, without suspicion, meet in his apartment at midnight, Paulina must go to bed before eleven, for if she is not asleep, when we slip out of the room, she will hear us. But *apropos* of Paulina, can you conceive what she means?—She knows there is somebody concealed here?—she talked of confidence, of letters. I shuddered, and thought I should quite betray myself; however, what she said afterwards convinced me that she had only spoken by chance.

Cons. Oh, she certainly thinks you are going to be married; and that your lover will to-morrow declare himself, and come hither.

Soph. I endeavoured to puzzle her as much as possible. I was anxious to make her explain herself clearly.

Cons. She is now with my aunt, and will, I hope,

hope, of her own accord confeſs all her fancied diſcoveries.

Soph. I have been thinking ſo, and for that reaſon am not ſorry ſhe is gone alone; for our preſence might, perhaps, have reſtrained her.

Conſ. We have not been by ourſelves ſince your laſt converſation with my aunt. Do you know, I was a little embarraſſed when ſhe communicated all to me: why did not you forewarn me that you intended to tell her of my being in the ſecret?

Soph. I did not tell her; ſhe learned it from my brother ſince ſhe condeſcended to make me her confident in this buſineſs; he frankly confeſſed he had written to me, and that you likewiſe knew of the affair. I told my mother nothing about it, leſt ſhe ſhould charge him with imprudence.

Conſ. Then, ſhe aſked no queſtions concerning me?

Soph. No; for you may be well aſſured I could not have told her an untruth. But what's o'clock.

Conſ. Eight.

Soph. Four hours ſtill to midnight!—Alas, though I wiſh the time to ſlide away, ſtill, as the moment approaches, my agitation and ſorrow redouble!—and my mother! my poor mother!—what muſt ſhe ſuffer!——my brother too, after four months abſence, I am going to embrace, to ſee again for a moment—and then, bid him adieu, perhaps, for ever!

Conſ. Still reſpecting his life, at leaſt, we may be eaſy, he is well, and nothing can impede his departure.

Soph. Thibaut told me he was ſhockingly pale and weak.—I even dread the interview this evening;

ing; he loves us ſo much, and has ſuch ſenſibility!——He wiſhed to ſee Paulina; and but for my mother, would not reſiſt his deſire of bidding her adieu. And Paulina herſelf, what will become of her when ſhe is told of our diſtreſſes?—All our troubles ruſh upon my mind at once; every inſtant, every reflexion, aggravates their bitterneſs.

Conſ. One of thoſe which I am leaſt able to bear, is the cruel and hateful preſence of the Baron de Sénanges.

Soph. Oh, Conſtance! do you know what a queſtion he aſked my mother this afternoon?

Conſ. No.

Soph. Why, for the firſt time, he took it into his head to inquire whether ſhe had a ſon. At theſe words, ſhe coloured, turned pale, her countenance was agitated, her eyes were full of tears, ſhe ſtuttered out ſome unintelligible words; in ſhort, I imagined ſhe was going to diſcover every thing.

Conſ. Were you preſent?

Soph. I was oppoſite to her; and, doubtleſs, my countenance, ſpite of my endeavours to the contrary, expreſſed all that was painted upon hers. However, ſhe preſently recovered herſelf. I thought I obſerved in the Baron a diſconcerted, aſtoniſhed look; but he ſoon appeared as uſual; and, perhaps, my fears deceived me. This unfortunate ſtory is ſo extraordinary, that it ſeems impoſſible for any one to gueſs the truth; at leaſt, I try to flatter myſelf with that thought.

Roſe. (*Coming in.*) Ladies, your ſupper is ready.

Soph. Well, let us go, my dear Conſtance. (*They go away.*)

Roſe. (*Alone.*) What the deuce is mademoiſelle Paulina doing in the flower-garden with that

Baron de Sénanges? they goſſip there, as if they had been acquainted theſe ten years!—ſhe will paſs by this way, to go into her own room; I ſhall wait for her; ſhe is vexed, becauſe my lady would not ſee her. Every body likes mademoiſelle Sophia beſt, and i'faith 'tis quite right, for ſhe's a jewel of a girl, that ſhe is. But methinks I feel ſome drops of rain.—It's cold this evening.—The letter will be wet, if t'ant already taken away.—Well, I ſhan't go to bed, for the gentleman will come; and 'tis fit I ſhould be one of the firſt to ſee him, ſince I have had the trouble of carrying the letter.—Oh, here is mademoiſelle Paulina.

SCENE VII.

PAULINA, ROSE.

Roſe. HEYDAY, mademoiſelle! you ſeem all in amaze. What's the matter?

Pau. (*Throwing herſelf into a chair.*) I certainly—have committed ſome act of imprudence,—though I know not how—I am quite exhauſted.

Roſe. What has happened to you?

Pau. Have you ſeen the Baron de Sénanges paſs by?

Roſe. No—but you were with him juſt now; has he told you any bad news? Speak, mademoiſelle, tell me what afflicts you; we may, perhaps, find out ſome remedy.

Pau. Alas! I have nothing but apprehenſions, and not one fixed idea. But what has happened is this. You know, my mother would not receive me. I went down from her room very ſorrowful, and found the Baron de Sénanges in the

the flower-garden, walking alone: he saw I was in tears, came to me, and asked me questions. I frankly told him the reason of my uneasiness; and added, that I plainly perceived my mother would not see me, because she dreaded my curiosity.

Rose. Did he seem of that mind? he certainly must know it —

Pau. "Do you think then," says he, "that she conceals some secret from you?"—Upon that, I replied, I was sure of it. He redoubled his questions. I owned that I knew part of this secret; that I was not ignorant of the Chevalier de Mirville's being concealed in the great room at the end of the gallery.—When I had spoken these words, he shuddered, exclaiming, "What a ray of light!" and that instant left me with precipitation.

Rose. What the deuce does he mean by his ray of light?

Pau. I know not; but he appeared to have learned a piece of news, both surprizing and dreadful.—His eyes seemed to flash with anger, the sound of his voice was terrifying.—Oh, heaven! I tremble still, when thinking of it.

Rose. He's a shameful man to scare you so.

Pau. Rose, go to my mother: her door, alas, is shut against me! but you, perhaps, may be admitted; speak to her, tell her candidly all my faults, and all that has happened to us: say, I implore her to hear me; go, I beseech you.

Rose. But I won't go to speak against you, mademoiselle.

Pau. To assist me in making reparation for my errours is the last service I shall require of you; pray, Rose, do not refuse me. Alas, my dear, I have hitherto given you a very bad example. Oh,

may you forget it, and hereafter be affected only by my repentance!

Roſe. You break my heart, mademoiſelle—take comfort—go into your own room, for it is near ten o'clock, and the ladies, perhaps, wait ſupper for you.

Pau. Undoubtedly, they think I have the happineſs of being with my mother.

Roſe. The moon is quite clouded over, we are going to have a ſtorm—'tis as dark as pitch; will you pleaſe to take my arm till you come to the ſtair-caſe?

Pau. No, I ſhall find my way alone very well—but do I not hear a noiſe?

Roſe. Yes, ſomebody's coming.

Pau. Do I not ſee a light?

Roſe. Yes, indeed; dear, dear! I am frightened.

Pau. Huſh, let us be ſilent. [*They liſten.*

SCENE VIII.

ROSE, PAULINA, THE MARCHIONESS.

Mar. (*with a lanthorn in her hand, ſpeaking at the further end of the ſtage.*) THEY are all in bed. I will wait on this ſpot for Conſtance and Sophia, to conduct them—I hear footſteps.

Roſe. (*Low to Paulina.*) Mercy upon me! 'tis my lady—anſwer, mademoiſelle.

Pau. I tremble.

(*The Marchioneſs advances, and by the light of her lanthorn diſcovers Paulina: Roſe makes her eſcape.*)

Mar.

Mar. What do I ſee?—is it you, Paulina?—at this hour, what are you doing here?

Pau. Deign, madam, to pardon me, and hear me for a moment, I conjure you!

Mar. (*Putting her lanthorn on the ground.*) What can you ſay in your own defence? The family are all in bed; it is night, it begins to rain, the wind and cold foretell a dreadful ſtorm; and yet I find you here alone; what can be the cauſe?—alas, I know it but too well!—you ſit up to obſerve my actions, to penetrate my ſecrets; for I am not ignorant that you ſuſpect me of having ſecrets. If it ſhould be ſo, and if there ſtill remains a virtuous ſentiment within your boſom, tremble at diſcovering them, if they are important.—Do they not affect you as much as me?—and can you flatter yourſelf with having ſufficient prudence and good ſenſe not to betray them?

Pau. Alas, madam! I have but too well deſerved ſuch cruel ſuſpicions; and, after my paſſed conduct, dare not anſwer for myſelf in future: but I am penitent, I ſee my errours in the ſtrongeſt light, I lament them, and am no longer engroſſed by any thing but the deſire of making atonement, if it be poſſible.

Mar. Still, what were you doing here in the dark, without your governeſs, without your ſiſter?

Pau. I was with Roſe, telling my griefs to her.

Mar. With Roſe!—is ſhe fit company for you, Paulina? you, who have a mother, a ſiſter, and ſuch a ſiſter!—She offers you an example of every virtue, joined to every grace; ſhe is adored by all who approach her; ſhe loves you, and yet it is not her whom you conſult, it is not her whom

you chooſe for a friend!—in ſhort, Roſe, a little mean, uneducated country girl, is your confident. Does not ſuch humiliation make you bluſh?

Pau. I do juſtice to Sophia, I do juſtice to myſelf, I am neither worthy of my mother, nor my ſiſter. But I am rejected, ſhunned, caſt off—what ought I to do?

Mar. To reflect and amend.—But go in, it is ten o'clock, go to bed. I ſhall preſently come up into your room, that I may be an eye-witneſs of your obedience. I ſuſpected you were here, and therefore came to ſee.

Pau. Then, I cannot talk with you even now.—Adieu, madam! I leave you, I obey you—and ſtill, I greatly want one word of conſolation from my mother; my heart is heavily oppreſſed; I am much to be pitied!

Mar. Paulina, you are naturally ſincere, will you promiſe to anſwer, with truth, a queſtion I am going to aſk you?

Pau. Yes, madam, indeed you may depend upon it.

Mar. Well, is it curioſity, or the deſire of obtaining an explanation, which makes you, at this moment, leave me with ſo much reluctance?

Pau. In the morning, madam, I followed you from curioſity; but the reſt of the day I ſought for you merely to acknowledge my faults; and at this moment affection alone detains me.—I ſee you are agitated, and a prey to ſome hidden grief. I feel, moſt bitterly, the dreadful affliction of being unable to ſhare it with you; but I have no wiſh to diſcover it.—I am unworthy of your confidence, and do not aſpire to that; ſtill, if you are unhappy, grant me the melancholy pleaſure of mingling my tears with yours. Fear no more queſtions; let not my mother be under reſtraint before me; let her

her weep in the boſom of a child who loves her; this is all, that child preſumes to aſk.

Mar. With ſuch ſentiments, with a heart ſo tender, how can there remain any faults?—Time will amend them: yes, Paulina, I truſt it will—you have taught me to read your heart; and, ſince you wiſh it, know the ſtate of mine. I am diſtracted by the moſt dreadful uneaſineſs; and what completes my miſery is the being unable to intruſt you with it.—Oh, my daughter, you, who are ſo dear to me, you, for whom I would reſign my life, I conceal from you, what I am not afraid of diſcovering to Thibaut, to Gerard, two ſervants!—I rely on their fidelity, yet dare not confide in yours!

Pau. Oh, madam! beſt and moſt affectionate of mothers, what remorſe and gratitude you at once excite in my boſom! I might ſoften your afflictions, and I aggravate them; I might have been your friend, and I was but too juſtly regarded by you as a dangerous ſpy, whoſe indiſcretion and curioſity, were equally to be dreaded!—Alas! what a terrible and ſtriking leſſon!

Mar. Come, you may inſtantly make amends for all the affliction you have given me. What will be my happineſs, if enabled to treat you like Sophia! ſhe is my confident, but my love for you equals that I feel for her, and our moſt pleaſing converſations are embittered by the painful regret of being obliged to exclude you from them.

Pau. Oh, madam! Sophia muſt conſole you for my errours—that thought renders her ſtill more dear to me—yes, heaven owed you a child like her.

Mar. Hark! what noiſe is that?

Pau. I think, I hear my ſiſter's voice.

Mar. Alas!—what can be the matter? I tremble—

Pau. It is my ſiſter.

SCENE IX.

SOPHIA, PAULINA, THE MARCHIONESS,

Roſe comes in immediately afterwards.

Mar. SOPHIA!—is it you?

Soph. Ah, madam! all is loſt—

Mar. How? ſpeak!—

Soph. The Baron de Sénanges knows that the Chevalier de Mirville is here.

Mar. Can it be?

Soph. He has gueſſed the remainder; and is quite furious.—He has already diſpatched two couriers; he has ordered his carriage, and will ſoon follow himſelf.—

Mar. Oh, heaven!

Soph. He will get the ſtart of us—the flight is now impracticable; and all our hopes are blaſted. Oh, madam!—

Mar. Who could betray us?—It muſt have been either Gerard, or Thibaut!

Pau. (*Throwing herſelf at her mother's feet.*) What do I hear?—no, madam, accuſe me only.

Mar. How ſay you?—good heaven!

Pau. Alas! I know not what miſchief I have done; but I diſcovered that the Chevalier de Mirville was concealed here, and I told it to Monſieur de Sénanges.

Mar. Unhappy girl!—this Chevalier de Mirville is your brother; he fought with, and killed the

the ſon of the Baron de Sénanges, and it is you who inform againſt him to his mortal enemy!

Pau. Ah me!

Mar. You lead your brother to the ſcaffold, you thruſt a poniard into the breaſt of a deſpairing mother; in ſhort, you ruin your unfortunate family: this, this is the fatal work of your guilty curioſity!

Pau. I am dying.—(*She falls down in a ſwoon at her mother's feet.*)

Soph. Ah, Paulina!

Roſ. She is ſenſeleſs!

Mar. Roſe, aſſiſt her—and let us go, and caſt ourſelves at the Baron de Sénange's feet. Come, Sophia, come; we muſt appeaſe him, or die. (*They both go out haſtily*)

SCENE X.

PAULINA *in a ſwoon*, ROSE.

Roſe. SO, they are gone! lack-a-day! what will become of me here, all alone by myſelf?—Mademoiſelle Paulina!—Mademoiſelle Paulina!—Ah, ſhe is like a dead thing.—And then laid here on the turf quite wet!—how grievous this is!—there, the rain increaſes.—Mercy! what thunder! what a ſtorm! I am all over of a quake—but there is no leaving this poor young lady. If I could only raiſe her up a little—I have not ſtrength for it!—one can't hear her breathe.—I begin to be ſadly afraid.—Bleſs me, what a clap of thunder!—I have not a drop of blood left in my veins!—(*She lays hold on Paulina's hands.*) She is as cold as ice.—Good Lord, good Lord, have pity on her!—It is ſo pitch dark, that I cannot ſee where I am—I

would set her down on the turf-seat, but I know not where it is.—Hah! there's a lanthorn, let's make use of it. (*She goes to fetch the lanthorn, which the Marchioness had put on the ground; then comes back again to Paulina, and looks at her by the light of the lanthorn.*) Lack-a-day, how pale she looks!—her hair is wet—I really must take her from hence. (*She puts the lanthorn on the ground, and endeavours to lift Paulina.*) It is so slippery!—Oh, what lightning!—There, thank God! I have done it this time. (*She sets Paulina upon the turf-seat, and holds her in her arms.*) I think she sighs—oh, now she is coming to herself.

Pau. Where am I? My mother!—where is she?

Rose. Mademoiselle—you are all alone along with me, with Rose.

Pau. My brother—what is become of him?

Rose. I know nothing fresh; I have not left you.

Pau. I informed against him—his life is in danger.—Ah, let us run—I cannot.—(*She falls down again on the turf-seat.*)

Rose. Good lack! there she is again sounded away.—Mademoiselle!

Pau. Why do I live?—My brother! perhaps, he is carried off—and it is I—I myself, who deliver him up to death!—and I cannot crawl to my mother—strength forsakes me—well, I must expire on this spot—forgotten, abandoned by all whom I hold dear!

Rose. Do you hear those screams?

Pau. Good heaven! the blood freezes in my veins!—Ah, doubtless, my unhappy brother is at this moment torn from his afflicted mother's arms.

Rose. The noise increases—dear, dear! I do believe they are breaking open the great gates.

Pau. I cannot support myself.—Run, Rose, run and inquire—go.

Rose. I am going, and will soon return. (*She goes out, and carries the lanthorn with her.*)

SCENE XI.

PAULINA, *alone.*

OH, brother, brother!—what will be thy fate?—Into what a frightful abyss have I plunged my family!—My mother, she hates me, she has cause.—Terrible moment, in which I have seen that affectionate parent drive me away with horrour, and overwhelm me with her just resentment!—Alas, the sound of that dreadful, though beloved voice, still vibrates on my ear!——But what's this?——what a noise of horses and carriages! what a terrifying tumult! (*A great clap of thunder is heard; Paulina rises terrified; the thunder, accompanied by lightning, continues with violence; Paulina dismayed, runs across the stage; all her motions should be expressive of the strongest terrour; at length, she again falls down on the turf-seat, and the thunder ceases. After a silence.*) The night—this impenetrable darkness—this awful thunder, every thing seems united to encrease the dread which overpowers me.—Death will at length put a period to these cruel torments:—oh, may that be as speedy, as my remorse is poignant!—Somebody comes.—Ah! what am I about to hear?

SCENE XII.

PAULINA, ROSE.

Roſe. MADEMOISELLE Paulina!

Pau. Well!—

Roſ. Good news! good news!

Pau. Oh, my brother!—but go on.

Roſe. Where are you then? for it is ſo dark!—

Pau. Come nearer. (*Paulina advances ſome ſteps.*) My brother, where is he?

Roſe. All is over, all is made up.

Pau. Can it be? do you not deceive me?

Roſe. They are all ſatisfied. I ſaw the Baron de Sénanges in tears embracing the Chevalier; I ſaw it with both my eyes.

Pau. My brother?

Roſe. Yes, he himſelf. Ah, this here is not all. But you totter; good lack, you will be down!

Pau. Roſe, my dear Roſe, embrace me; alas! I have only you to ſhare my joy and ſorrow!

Roſe. Do ſeat yourſelf, mademoiſelle, you are all over of a quake.

Pau. The Baron de Sénanges embracing my brother!—Ah, what miraculous cauſe could produce this happy revolution?

Roſe. The Baron's ſon is not killed; quite otherwiſe; he is better than the Chevalier; and came all of a ſudden, and at the very moment when his father was going to ſet off, in ſpite of my lady's tears and lamentations.

Pau. How fortunate! but is this young man here, then?

Roſe.

Rose. Aye, to be sure—and, what is the finest part of the story, he is our writer.

Pan. Hah!

Rose. Yes, indeed, and it was he who wrote the letter to mademoiselle Sophia; he's in love with her. He heard her spoke of at Valenciennes; so, from that time, her fame had touched his heart; and then, after having fought near here, he remained on the spot senseless, for I don't know how long, till some of our country folks carried him to their house; he gave them a deal of money to keep the secret; and so there he again heard talk of mademoiselle Sophia; in short, he soon recovered, for his wound was not dangerous; and his desire of seeing mademoiselle Sophia made him scamper about the country as soon as he could walk: at length, he has seen her, heard her, wrote to her; and so then he came to cast himself at his father's feet, and to tell him all this.

Pan. Oh, heaven! what a happy conclusion!—but how could you learn these particulars?

Rose. I asked every body; besides, I went into the saloon, where I saw and heard what I tell you; the doors are all wide open; masters, servants, in short, the whole family is assembled there. I saw my lady in the arms of mademoiselle Sophia, and mademoiselle Constance; she was ready to die for joy, at seeing the Baron de Sénanges and his son embrace the Chevalier.—What a likely gentleman that young M. de Sénanges is! the Chevalier an't handsomer. They say, he was vastly surprized, when he heard he had been fighting with mademoiselle Sophia's brother; he cried like a child; howsomever, now he is very happy, for my lady

and

and the Baron have given their conſent, and the wedding will be to-morrow.

Pau. My mother!—do you think, Roſe, that ſhe obſerved you?

Roſe. Oh, no; I was behind every body; beſides, ſhe only ſaw her children; I heard her ſay; "Ah, what a happy mother am I!"

Pau. She forgets that I am her daughter!—My heart is torn in pieces.—However, I am now the only object of pity. Relieved from painful diſquietudes which deſtroyed me, why then do my tears ſtill flow with the ſame bitterneſs?—My mother in the arms of Sophia and Conſtance, does not even remember, that the unhappy Paulina exiſts!—Nothing remains to complete her joy, though ſhe left her unfortunate daughter without aſſiſtance, and dying. See, then, to what an exceſs of harſhneſs, I have, by my faults, driven the moſt indulgent, the beſt of parents!—Frightful and terrible leſſon!—I had the tendereſt of mothers, I was the darling ſiſter; but now, forgotten, abandoned, I am leſs than a ſtranger to my family!—Alas! I muſt lament my misfortunes; but I cannot complain, ſince they are all my own work.

SCENE XIII. and laſt.

PAULINA, ROSE, SOPHIA,

Followed by ſervants, who carry flambeaux, and remain at the end of the ſtage.

Soph. WHERE is ſhe? where is ſhe?

Pau. Oh, heaven! my ſiſter.—

Soph.

Soph. (Running to her, and embracing her.) Dear Paulina, all our misfortunes are ended! Come, my brother longs to embrace you; my mother asks for you.

Pau. (Embracing Sophia.) Ah, sister! I know every thing.—But my mother asks for me?—is that really true?

Soph. Come to her arms, my dear; she expects you, she wishes for you.

Pau. Alas! how can I present myself before her?

Soph. All is forgotten; she remembers nothing but your grief—that feeling mother trembles to think of all you must have suffered—your sorrows only dwell upon her mind; nor does she doubt the propriety of your future conduct.

Pau. Ah, I will justify her expectations! henceforth I only wish to live, that I may atone for those faults, of which, her goodness makes me repent still more than ever: Come, dear Sophia, deign to lead me to her feet. Ah!—methinks I hear her voice, and my brother's likewise!

Soph. It is she.

Pau. Good heaven!

(The Marchioness appears at the end of the stage; she is supported on one side by the Chevalier de Valcour her son, and on the other by Constance. The Chevalier leaves her, to go and embrace Paulina, who rushes into his arms, and runs afterwards to cast herself at her mother's feet; the Marchioness faints away in the arms of the Chevalier and Sophia; Constance stands behind, and supports her. The curtain drops.

THE

THE

DANGERS OF THE WORLD;

A DRAMA,

OF THREE ACTS.

Persons of the Drama.

The Marchioneſs de Germini.

The Viſcounteſs Dorothea, *friend to the Marchioneſs.*

Juliet, *the Marchioneſs's woman.*

A Millener.

Doriza, *aunt to the Marchioneſs.*

A Valet-de-chambre.

A Footman.

Scene, the Marchioneſs's houſe at Paris.

THE DANGERS OF THE WORLD;

Apprendete, apprendete:
Che de' più bei piaeer ſovente in ſeno
Sta naſcoſto il veleno.
Pignotti, Favola del Fanciullo & della Veſpa.
And know, that oft in pleaſure's guiſe
Conceal'd within, the venom lies. T.

ACT I.

SCENE the Firſt.

The ſtage repreſents a dreſſing-room, with a toilette, on which are books, an ink-ſtand, &c.

Juliet, holding papers, and ſpeaking behind the ſcenes.

NO; once more, my lady is not at home: carry back all your trumpery, and get you gone. Theſe milleners will turn my head. However, there is one of them ſent off. Oh, that I could

could thus drive away all the others!—What a train is here, every morning! the anti-room ſwarms with trades-people, agents, and creditors; one knows not which to attend to. Here's a packet of bills to be delivered to my lady. All theſe muſt be paid, and how?—If this continues, I ſhall die of vexation. Let's ſee what theſe deviliſh bills amount to. (*She opens one of them.*) Oh, this is the cabinet-maker's bill. (*She reads.*) "For a little table, ten guineas; for a work-box, "fifteen guineas; for a bureau, thirty-three "pounds."* It was very neceſſary to lay out thirty-three pounds on a bureau, to write to the Viſcounteſs Dorothea; for this is my miſtreſs's chief employment.—To paſs their lives together, and regularly write each other ten notes a-day! Ah, 'tis more from affectation than friendſhip!—My dear miſtreſs, you who were once ſo innocent, ſo unaffected, what a change!—But let us go on. (*She reads.*) "For a little ink-ſtand, eight pounds; "for a large ink-ſtand, twelve pounds; for a "private letter-caſe"—It is enough to drive one wild. Would not any body think this bill was for a prime miniſter, intruſted with all the buſineſs of the nation? Let's ſee the total. (*She reads.*) "Total, two hundred and thirty-three pounds!" It makes one's hair ſtand an end.—And this. (*She reads.*) "For a *ſeve déjeûner*, with a double "cypher of myrtles and roſes, twenty-five pounds. "For two vaſes, with a double cypher of ama-"ranths and heartſeaſe, ſixteen pounds. For a "groop, repreſenting the friendſhip of two young "women, five pounds; for a tea table, &c. &c. "Total, three hundred and forty-four pounds." Is this credible?—Ah, here is one, which will

* The livres are reckoned at tenpence each. T.

not

not come to ſo much, for I ſee it is only for hair. (*She reads, as ſhe runs it over.*) "Rings of "hair, watch with hair, chain of hair, bracelets "of hair, ſeal of hair, necklace of hair, box of hair. "Total, four hundred and twelve pounds." Four hundred and twelve pounds in hair!—what extravagance!—My poor lady! it is all over with her; ſhe is running to deſtruction. With a genteel, but limited fortune, how can all this be ſupported? My maſter too, is abſent; what will he ſay at his return? My miſtreſs, who is naturally ſo good, ſo delicate, how can ſhe abuſe, to ſuch an exceſs, the confidence of a huſband on whom ſhe doats? It is that thoughtleſs creature, that Viſcounteſs Dorothea, who hurries her away. Unhappy connexion! curſed friendſhip!—I cannot finiſh reading theſe bills, they pierce my very heart! Let's ſet the toilette in order: my miſtreſs, will preſently return to finiſh dreſſing. (*In ſetting the toilette to rights, ſhe perceives a figure made of biſcuit.*) Heyday! what's this? a figure made of biſcuit.—It holds a dog;—oh, 'tis Friendſhip, and a preſent from the Viſcounteſs. Well, now we ſhall ramble about all day to the ſhops, that we may find a preſent equally ingenious for her.—But there's ſomebody coming—hah! 'tis madame Doriza.

SCENE II.

JULIET, DORIZA.

Jul. IF you will pleaſe, madam, to ſtay a moment, I will go and acquaint my lady.

Dor. No, ſhe is engaged with her ſteward, I will not diſturb her; beſides, I am happy, my dear

dear Juliet, to have a little converſation with you. I have been abſent for ten months; it is but a week ſince I returned, conſequently, I have many queſtions to aſk you.

Jul. To you, madam, I am indebted for every thing; my education, my ſtation, my exiſtence, all reſult from your goodneſs; therefore you may depend on my ſincerity, which will be as perfect as my gratitude is lively.

Dor. Your attachment, my dear Juliet, both to my niece and me, is the moſt pleaſing return I could expect for the care I took of your childhood. I know the ſolidity of your underſtanding and the ſteadineſs of your temper; I am very certain that you give my niece the moſt prudent advice; but does ſhe follow it exactly?—I am but juſt come, I, as yet, know nothing; however, I confeſs to you, that I have already ſeen many little things here which diſpleaſe me.

Jul. Ah, madam! how unfortunate has your abſence been to us!

Dor. Alas, you terrify me!

Jul. Calm your apprehenſions, madam; all may yet be rectified: the Marchioneſs is ſtill reſpectable, ſtill worthy of your tenderneſs; but leave us no more.

Dor. You know with what anxiety I quitted her; the arrangement of my affairs made it neceſſary; I relied on the goodneſs of her diſpoſition, on the education I had given her; beſides, ſhe was twenty, and her underſtanding appeared to me above her years. I had guided her firſt ſteps in the world; and after having obſerved and accompanied her near twelve months, I thought there would be no danger in abſenting myſelf; and

and I left her under the care of her mother-in-law, not without concern, but with confidence, at leaſt.

Jul. One of our chief misfortunes is, that her mother-in-law is a very old woman, who was naturally rather weak, and has, for theſe ſix months paſſed, been almoſt ſuperannuated.

Dor. Why did you not inform me of this?

Jul. Becauſe, having but few opportunities of ſeeing her, though we live in her houſe, I did not know it till very lately, when we were in daily expectation of your return.

Dor. True, my return has been delayed.

Jul. My lady, ſeparated from you and the Marquis, left to herſelf, having but little experience, (more fatal, perhaps, than a total ignorance, becauſe it gives confidence and preſumption) in ſhort, my lady, endued with good-nature, worth, and feeling, but giddy, and eaſily miſled, has not been able to reſiſt the danger of bad advice; ſhe ruins herſelf by fooliſh expences, buys every thing, pays for nothing, loſes all reliſh for employment, and neglects her talents, to give herſelf up to a diſſipation, from which ſhe does not even reap amuſement. I ſee her return in an evening, ſpent, fatigued, regretting the uſe ſhe has made of the paſſed day, her heart and mind equally void, and the next day, without delight, but from cuſtom, again entering on the ſame career.

Dor. Alas! what do you tell me? and what will her huſband ſay? He, who had ſo high an opinion of her principles and underſtanding; he, who fearing leſt her life ſhould be dull in the country, at a diſtance from Paris, brought her hither,

hither, left her under his mother's protection, and when he went away, ordered his ſteward to ſupply her with as much money as ſhe pleaſed. Ah! could not ſuch confidence and eſteem reſtrain her? Is ſhe ignorant then, that by abuſing it, ſhe diſgraces, and renders herſelf for ever unworthy of it?

Jul. Ah, madam, do not accuſe her heart!

Dor. But of what uſe is a good heart, if the conduct and actions of life contradict its ſentiments?

Jul. To lament our faults, and to amend them.

Dor. To amend them!—Ah! is that always practicable? No; thoſe perſons who are capable of committing ſerious faults, never reflect on the poſſibility of amendment; or, to ſpeak more properly, the ſuppoſition of ſuch a reflexion is chimerical; hurried on, ſeduced, miſled, can they ſtill preſerve the uſe of their reaſon, and the power of reflecting? How could ſuch natural ideas, which I have ſo frequently inforced upon my niece, be effaced from her remembrance?

Jul. Poſſibly, madam, my affection for her, makes me exaggerate the dangers of her ſituation. I am not thoroughly acquainted with her affairs; and, perhaps, they are leſs perplexed than I imagine.

Dor. However, it is neceſſary to ſettle them with expedition, and before the Marquis's return, which will be ſpeedy.

Jul. Ah, madam! why has he deferred it ſo long?

Dor. Alas! he only thought of being abſent ſix months. The ſame fatality which kept me at my

thy eſtate, detained him in Germany, whither, you know, he was ſummoned to take poſſeſſion of his uncle's fortune. At length, he writes me word, that his buſineſs is finiſhed; and being happily freed from every embarraſſment, he hopes to come hither by the end of the month.

Jul. What a revolution will his return produce!—my lady both dreads and wiſhes for it.

Dor. Such are the fruits of imprudence and of levity, namely inconſiſtency, repentance, and regret. I think, my dear Juliet, (notwithſtanding the frailty of the human race) that we are, by nature, reaſonable creatures; ceaſing to be ſuch, trouble and diſquietude torment and conſume us; we are no longer at peace with ourſelves; in ſhort, without reaſon, farewell to happineſs and tranquillity; and the falſe pleaſures which reaſon reproves, are always ſucceeded by diſguſt. (*She looks at her watch.*) But the time paſſes on; my niece will ſoon come to us, and I ſtill have a thouſand queſtions to aſk you. Tell me, Juliet, what is the character of the Viſcounteſs Dorothea? She ſeems very giddy, and her connexion with my niece—

Jul. Ah, madam! that unhappy connexion is the cauſe of all our misfortunes. The Viſcounteſs does not want goodneſs of heart, and is naturally well diſpoſed, open, and incapable of envy and every low ſentiment; but ſhe has all the defects which reſult from a bad education; ſuch as deficiency of underſtanding, and exceſſive levity; always unemployed, always wiſhing for amuſement, and not having the leaſt idea of what conſtitutes real happineſs, ſhe ſeeks felicity where it was never found. Schemes for entertainments, fights, balls, the deſire of being ſeen,

of being better dreſſed than others, or inventing a faſhion; in ſhort, of paſſing for the perſon whoſe ſociety is moſt coveted, and whoſe company is thought moſt agreeable by thoſe who move in the very firſt circle, theſe are the only ideas which occupy her mind. With ſuch extravagances, ſhe unites a thouſand ridiculous pretenſions; affects an empaſſioned *ſenſibility*, and a deciſive taſte for the arts; muſick and painting turn her head; ſhe ſays, ſhe reads all night; ſhe likewiſe prides herſelf on *philoſophy* and *beneficence*; theſe two high-ſounding words, are always in her mouth: ſhe goes through courſes of natural philoſophy and chemiſtry, miſſes all the lectures, learns nothing, knows nothing, ſpeaks about every thing, decides magiſterially, impoſes ſometimes on fools, and is pitied by all ſenſible perſons.

Dor. What a picture!

Jul. Notwithſtanding all theſe follies, as ſhe poſſeſſes a high title, with above eight thouſand a year, ſhe is quite the faſhion. People laugh at her, ridicule her weakneſs, and even aſperſe her conduct: however, ſhe lives in a good houſe, has boxes at all the public places, and is beautiful and young; theſe advantages are not ſufficient to procure eſteem, and obtain true reſpect; but thoſe perſons who poſſeſs them, are certain of being courted; and that is all the Viſcounteſs deſires. She reflects too little, and has not judgement, delicacy, or greatneſs of mind enough, to carry her pretenſions further in this reſpect.

Dor. And ſuch is the friend whom my niece has choſen!

Jul. She forced herſelf upon the Marchioneſs, who never would have ſought her friendſhip, though

though she yielded to her advances. My lady's reputation, then perfect in every view, the fame of her genius, knowledge, and accomplishments, the praise bestowed upon her conduct and character, all these united advantages made the Viscountess wish to be intimate with her; not that she had sense enough to perceive and value them, but because she thought it would give her one more air of consequence to be the chosen friend of madame de Germini. My lady was flattered by the advances of the Viscountess, and pleased with their motive, which, though she easily penetrated, she pretended to mistake, and attribute to friendship, that she might be justified in making a return. Besides, the Viscountess Dorothea, notwithstanding all her absurdities, caprices, and foolish pretensions, is not unpleasing when she forgets the different parts she wishes to act: she is good-natured, lively, and ingenuous; she will never attach, but is sometimes agreeable; and if she does not interest, still, she frequently amuses. My lady was, at first, deeply struck by her follies, till custom made them less apparent; and, what is not credible, she has, at last, adopted many of them.

Dor. I think I hear a door open—perhaps, she is coming.—Observe me, Juliet, take care to conceal this conversation from her; endeavour to acquire an exact knowledge of her affairs this very day, if possible, and you shall give me an account of them in the evening. Besides, she will herself, perhaps, intrust me with her difficulties.

Jul. Ah, madam! her gratitude, and affection for you are excessive; but she has so much spirit! her obligations to you are so great already! No, a

dread of the aſſiſtance you might offer, will alone prevent her from treating you with that confidence which you deſerve.

Dor. She has not been afraid of abuſing her huſband's confidence, yet dares not have recourſe to me in this deep embarraſſment! Oh, Juliet! let us never confound pride with true delicacy; the one produces errours, and leads to ingratitude; while the other is the ſureſt and moſt enlightened guide which the heart and underſtanding can follow. What! to deſpiſe the aſſiſtance of friendſhip, and have the blameable and fooliſh inconſiſtency of bluſhing to accept what friendſhip longs to offer! to riſque ruin, rather than apply to her real friend; one, who has always been a mother to her! to dread the avowal of her faults to ſuch a one, to be afraid of aſking for her advice, her aſſiſtance, oh, Juliet! is this delicacy, juſtice, or gratitude?

Jul. Pray, madam, compoſe yourſelf, I think I hear her.

Dor. Yes, 'tis ſhe. What a melancholy air ſhe has!

Jul. The ſteward's diſcourſe has not enlivened her.

SCENE III.

JULIET, DORIZA,

THE MARCHIONESS, *in a morning dreſs.*

Mar. JULIET—Hah, madam! are you here? I was going to wait upon you.—Why did not you let me know you were come?

Dor

Dor. I heard you were engaged in buſineſs.

Mar. Should not every thing give way to you? (*She kiſſes her hand. Doriza looks at her a moment in ſilence.*) You look at my head-dreſs; perhaps, you think it ridiculouſly high.

Dor. No, I did not think about it: what ſignifies the head-dreſs? but I obſerve, with concern, that you are aſtoniſhingly thin and altered.

Jul. Aye, true enough, indeed.

Dor. You keep late hours, I dare ſay.

Mar. That cannot be avoided, when one lives in the world.

Dor. I alſo lived in it, and not long ago neither; but I never kept late hours.

Mar. Nevertheleſs, at the maſquerade-ball—

Dor. And do you only ſit up late at the maſquerade-ball?

Mar. Yes; a little at pharoah, a little at the Viſcounteſs's private ſuppers—but, notwithſtanding this, my lady is generally in bed by five in the morning.

Mar. Another time, Juliet, ſpeak when you are ſpoken to; and pray let it be with leſs exaggeration. Leave the room. [*Juliet goes out.*

Dor. You treat her very ill.

Mar. How! when ſhe wants to calumniate me to you?

Dor. What ſignifies that? are you not certain I ſhall always believe you in preference to any other perſon? Poſitively aſſure me, that you neither make a practice of playing, nor of keeping late hours, and then, notwithſtanding the good opinion I had of Juliet, I ſhall be thoroughly perſuaded that ſhe has ſpoken falſely: for though ſhe is much ſuperiour to her ſtation, ſtill, I cannot heſitate a

moment between your aſſertion and that of a lady's woman.—You make no reply.

Mar. (*After a ſhort pauſe*) Juliet, aunt, has only ſpoken the ſtrict truth.

Dor. And, nevertheleſs, you would have accuſed her of calumniating you, had it not been for this explanation.

Mar. I was wrong; however, you, at leaſt, ſee that I atone for my fault without equivocating: I gave way to the firſt impulſe of anger which naturally aroſe from her eagerneſs to acquaint you with things, which, ſhe was certain you would diſapprove.

Dor. Since you do theſe things without ſcruple, well knowing they may diſpleaſe me, why ſhould you fear my being informed of them? Are you not your own miſtreſs? I have no authority but what your friendſhip gives me; and when that is diſclaimed, I ſhall neither reprove your faults, nor offer you advice.

Mar. Oh, ſpeak not thus, you pierce my very ſoul! Can you ſuſpect me of forgetting what I owe to you, or of not having all the reſpect and attachment of the moſt affectionate daughter? How often have I lamented this long abſence which has ſeparated us! Ah, would to heaven, you had never left me! No, madam, my heart is ſtill the ſame, you will ever maintain all your influence over it; and be aſſured, that nothing but the dread of afflicting you could have ſet bounds to my confidence.

Dor. (*Embracing her.*) Alas! can any thing afflict me more than your want of confidence?—Let me then clearly ſee into a heart naturally ſo tender and ſincere, and which, perhaps, is yet but half diſcloſed.

Mar.

Mar. (*With confuſion.*) What do you require? Beſides, I have no ſecrets.—True it is, that for ſome time paſſed I have given myſelf up to a way of life too fatiguing for me, but I can renounce it without concern, being ſenſible, that ſolitude and employment are better ſuited to my turn of mind than all this idle diſſipation.

Dor. Solitude is neither ſuited to your age, nor your rank; could you not renounce the errours of exceſſive diſſipation, without turning recluſe? that, my dear, would be no more than exchanging one folly for another. You ought to live in the world; enjoy its innocent pleaſures, give up ſeven hours of the day to ſociety, but, at leaſt, employ the reſt in cultivating your mind and talents. This is all I ever required of you, and this you promiſed. We likewiſe agreed, that you ſhould not play at games of chance.

Mar. True; but I have always played for ſo low a ſtake!—

Dor. Games of chance are always high and dangerous, eſpecially when purſued till five in the morning; beſides, theſe are the things which give a woman the reputation of a gameſter; and I have ſo frequently told you the dreadful conſequences of ſuch a character!—

Mar. You left me, and I went aſtray; you return, and I recover my guide,—I will reform, depend upon it.

Dor. I, at leaſt, ſee that your heart is not changed—and am now certain that all may be rectified.—What do you do this evening?

Mar. I have no engagement. I expect company this morning, but in the evening I ſhall be at liberty.

Dor. Will you give me leave to ſup with you?

Mar. Will I!—is there any thing I can ever prefer to the happineſs of your ſociety?—I ſhall be quite alone.

Dor. May I depend upon it?

Mar. You may indeed; I ſhould think any third perſon troubleſome who deprived me of a *tête-à-tête* with you.

Dor. Then you ſtill love me?

Mar. As much as life, and I feel it more than ever.

Dor. You may very eaſily prove that.

Mar. Ah! how?

Dor. By granting me an entire confidence—but we will talk this over in the evening. Only promiſe to anſwer with ſincerity, every queſtion which I ſhall aſk you.

Mar. Alas! I could wiſh that you were unacquainted with my faults; but to diſſemble, and above all with you, no, my dear aunt, you cannot fear it.

Dor. Enough; I am perfectly eaſy and contented—but you muſt finiſh dreſſing. Adieu, my dear child; in the evening we will reſume this converſation. [*She embraces her.*

Mar. How happy does your goodneſs make me!

Jul. (*Entering.*) Madam, here's a note, and the ſervant waits for an anſwer.

Dor. Well, my child, adieu, till the evening. (*The Marchioneſs attends Dorixa, they embrace at the end of the room.*)

Jul. (*Looking at them.*) My lady is quite ſoftened.—I am tempted to think ſhe has confeſſed every thing. Ah, how I wiſh it!

SCENE

SCENE IV.

THE MARCHIONES, JULIET, A VALET-DE-CHAMBRE, A FOOTMAN.

Mar. (*Returning.*) COME, my dear Juliet, embrace me, and receive my excuſes for the manner in which I juſt now ſpoke to you.

Jul. (*She kiſſes the hand which the Marchioneſs holds out. The Marchioneſs embraces her.*) Excuſes!

Mar. Yes, that expreſſion is not too ſtrong. Were you not the companion of my childhood? are you not the friend whom my aunt has choſen for me?—Brought up with me, brought up by her; how many claims have you to my affection!—Ah, Juliet! why did I not improve, like you, by the education I received?—Alas, I never felt my faults ſo bitterly as to-day!

Jul. Oh, madam! how you melt my heart! I foreſaw that this ſalutary converſation would entirely reſtore you to yourſelf.

Mar. My aunt!—how I love her! what mind can be compared with hers! What ſenſe! what gentleneſs! what charming and tender indulgence!—

A Valet-de-chamber, (bringing in a note.) Madam, this is from the Baronneſs de Saint-Phar; an anſwer is deſired.

Mar. Very well. (*She reads, the Valet-de-chambre goes out.*) Such importunity!—but I muſt anſwer it. What have I done with the firſt note? Oh, here it is. Come, Juliet, I'll write while you finiſh my hair.—Only put ſome flowers on my

head—make haſte.—(*She ſits down at her toilette, and takes her ink-ſtand.*)

Jul. (*Aſide.*) Theſe confounded notes will divert her from her good intentions, I dare anſwer for it. (*Taking ſome flowers out of a band-box.*) Will you pleaſe, madam, to wear this wreath of roſes.

Mar. Any thing you chooſe, it is equal to me. (*Juliet approaches and dreſſes her hair. The Marchioneſs looking about her toilette.*) Why where is my ſeal? (*She perceives the biſcuit figure.*) Ah, Juliet!—

Jul. What, madam, have I pricked you?

Mar. Pricked me! no; but look at this pretty thing.

Jul. Oh, that's all!—'tis one of the Viſcounteſs's gallant attentions. There's a note too ſomewhere. (*She ſearches with the tail of her comb.*) Here it is.

Mar. Why did you not tell me of this? (*She reads the note.*)

Jul. I forgot it. I am ſo worried with all theſe figures of friendſhip, and altars of friendſhip, and cyphers!

Mar. Her note is charming; and ſuch attention is ſo kind!—

Jul. (*Aſide.*) Yes, to be ſure.

Mar. Juliet, you muſt grant that the figure is delightful; it has ſuch expreſſion!

Jul. I ſee nothing but a ſilly long face, which, appears, to me, ſo unmeaning as to give one the vapours. [*She yawns.*

Mar. (*Drily.*) You are nice. For my part, I think it charming.

Jul. That's quite ſufficient.

Mar. (*Viewing herſelf in a looking-glaſs.*) How you

you have dreſſed my hair!—'tis frightful! give me another branch of roſes—and then ſeal my letters, and carry them away. (*Juliet ſeals them with wafers. The Marchioneſs adjuſts her head-dreſs.*)

A footman enters and ſpeaks. Madam, this is from the Counteſs de Roſanne. (*He gives the Marchioneſs a note which ſhe reads.*)

Jul. So, this is the third!

Footman. The Marchioneſs Sophia, and madame de Torvures, madam, have ſent to know how you do.

Mar. Very well. There is no anſwer required to this note. Juliet, give him thoſe which you have juſt ſealed. (*The Marchioneſs to the footman, as he goes out.*) Stay, you muſt go and inquire after madame d'Orville.

Jul. Is ſhe ill?

Mar. Oh, no; but ſhe had a little head-ach at the opera laſt night. (*To the footman.*) And then after madame de Germeuil—do you hear?

Footman. Yes, madam. [*He goes out.*

Mar. (*Still dreſſing her hair.*) A pin—ſet this curl right. (*She looks at herſelf.*) I certainly am very much altered to-day.

Jul. That is not wonderful, conſidering your way of life, which, if continued, will in two years deſtroy all your beauty.

Mar. I don't much care; muſt it not always come to that?

Jul. True; but, if we anticipate old age, we ruin our health, which is a real misfortune. Beſides, madam, if you are ſo indifferent about appearance, why theſe endleſs dreſſings, which

conſume that time, you might employ ſo much better.

Mar. You are right; eſpecially as dreſſing overwhelms me with fatigue and *ennui*.

A valet-de-chambre, enters and ſpeaks. Mademoiſelle le Doux deſires to know whether ſhe may be admitted?

Jul. So, here come the milleners.

Mar. Send her away, I don't want any thing.

Valet-de-chambre. She ſays, ſhe only deſires the honour of ſeeing my lady, and of ſhewing her the new faſhions; beſides, ſhe was ſent by the Viſcounteſs.

Mar. Oh, that makes a difference. Well, tell her to walk in; but give her notice that I abſolutely will not buy any thing.

Jul. (Aſide.) Aye, aye, a fine reſolution!

Mar. I muſt get rid of her.

Jul. Here ſhe is with all her ſhop.

SCENE V.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET, THE VALET-DE-CHAMBRE, THE FOOTMAN, MADEMOISELLE LE DOUX, A SHOP-MAID *carrying ſeveral band-boxes.*

Mar. (Riſing from her toilette.) GOOD-MORROW mademoiſelle le Doux; you will be much diſpleaſed with me, for I ſhall poſitively buy nothing.

M. le Doux. Oh, madam, intereſt does not guide me; but I am very ſure no lady has more taſte than the Marchioneſs, and I only wiſhed to ſhew her

her that I am not totally unworthy of obtaining her protection.

Mar. I have often heard you mentioned by the Viſcounteſs Dorothea.

M. le Doux. She is exceſſively good to me, and indeed, there is ſo great a pleaſure in ſerving her! her figure would improve the moſt indifferent work. (*While ſhe is ſpeaking, ſhe ſhews variety of millenery.*) For my part, madam, I have a whim which will hinder me from making my fortune; it is this, that I have no cleverneſs in working for any but pretty women; and never ſeek the cuſtom of the ugly.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) She underſtands her trade. (*The Marchioneſs, examining all the millenery.*) Ah! here's a droll cap!

M. le Doux. I invented and made it laſt night; I have named it, *The Wag*: it would become you vaſtly, madam.

Mar. You are very civil, mademoiſelle le Doux.—Juliet, come and look at *The Wag*. It really is pretty.

Jul. Indeed, madam, it is frightful!

Mar. (*Putting it on her head, and looking at herſelf in the glaſs.*) What a figure!—See here, mademoiſelle le Doux, I look like a mad-cap with your *Wag*.

M. le Doux. Oh, madam! I only wiſh your picture could be drawn at this moment. Indeed, the cap becomes you ſo extremely, that I ſhall be quite inconſolable if you do not take it. 'Tis not for the value of the cap, I proteſt, for madame de Larcy wanted to buy it this morning.

Mar. Madame de Larcy!—why ſure, ſhe is a little too old for waggery.

M. le Doux. And therefore I would not ſell it

it to her. Keep it, madam; it will only ſuit you. The Viſcounteſs is very pretty; but ſhe has not your livelineſs, your features, and certainly would not look ſo well as you do in this cap.

Mar. What's the price?

M. le Doux. You will obſerve, madam, that it is ſuch blond as you really never ſaw, that the work is infinite, and ſtill, 'tis only ſix guineas.

Mar. Ah! indeed, I ſhould have thought it dearer.

Jul. Why, an ell of blond, and half an ell of gauze for ſix guineas, is certainly a great bargain.—

Mar. Oh, I hear the Viſcounteſs's voice!

Jul. So, ſo, all the millenery will remain where it is.

Mar. Yes, it is ſhe. (*She goes running out to meet her.*)

SCENE VI.

JULIET, MADEMOISELLE LE DOUX.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) WOULD not any body think they were going to meet after a year's abſence?—they only parted at four this morning.—What abſurdity!—but it is the faſhion.

M. le Doux. (*Aſide.*) I ſee I muſt make this girl my friend. (*Aloud.*) I am told, mademoiſelle, that you have a great eſteem for madame Girard, who generally works for the Marchioneſs. I think, were I known to you, you would not diſlike ſeeing me here.

Jul. You are miſinformed, mademoiſelle; for

ſo far from liking madame Girard, I cannot even bear her.

M. le Doux. Oh, I am charmed to hear you ſpeak with ſuch openneſs: I would not injure any one; but, ſince you know madame Girard, I will tell you freely, that I do not believe ſhe deſerves the confidence of genteel people: ſhe is not cleverer than other folks; and then, ſhe is ſo greedy, ſo covetous.—But I well know how to acknowledge ſervices, I aſſure you.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) I ſee her drift.—This is not new to me.

M. le Doux. I ſhould be happy, were there any thing in my ſhop which would pleaſe you. This half-dreſs cap, for inſtance—

Jul. I like it very much; but you have a little cloak there, with which I am quite in love.

M. le Doux. (*Aſide.*) She ſpeaks without ceremony. (*Aloud.*) Why really, the lace round it is ſuperb; but it is much at your ſervice, as well as the cap.

Jul. Oh, they would be too coſtly for me.

M. le Doux. Sure you joke, mademoiſelle? I beg you will allow me to preſent you with theſe two trifles. I aſk no price but your friendſhip.

Jul. And my lady's cuſtom?

M. le Doux. (*Laughing.*) Oh, that's underſtood.

Jul. Keep your trumpery to yourſelf, mademoiſelle le Doux. You judged of me by all the lady's women you have known; but, for my part, I ſhall not be ſo unjuſt as to confound all milleners with you. Another time then, be more circumſpect, and remember that you may, in every ſtation of life, meet with noble and honourable ſentiments.

M. le

M. le Doux. (*Aſide.*) What a ſtrange crabbed humour!

Jul. Here comes my lady.

SCENE VII.

JULIET, MADEMOISELLE LE DOUX, THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS.

The Marchioneſs and Viſcounteſs come in arm in arm. *

Viſ. (*To the March.*) WHAT a value, my love, you place on ſo ſlight an attention! (*She embraces her.*)

Mar. Oh, it is charming! ſee, there it ſtill remains on the toilette; for I but this inſtant diſcovered it.—Juliet, take and carry it into my cloſet.

Jul. What, madam?

Mar. That biſcuit figure, but pray take care not to break it.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) The loſs would be great indeed! (*She takes the figure and goes out.*)

Viſ. Now, let us employ ourſelves a little with mademoiſelle le Doux. (*To the Marchioneſs.*) My dear, is ſhe not a moſt ſweet woman?—Mademoiſelle le Doux, have you any *pouffs*? †

* Every time theſe two friends ſay *tender* things, they ſhould ſuddenly aſſume a ſtrill, drawling, mincing voice, looking at each other in a languiſhing manner, with their heads reclined, and frequently embracing, &c.

† A *pouff*, is light ſort of cap, made with one ſingle piece of gauze, diſpoſed in large puffs, and ornamented with feathers, flowers, &c. T.

M. le

M. le Doux. Yes, madam; here is one in the very neweſt ſtyle.

Viſ. 'Tis a monſter.—Shew me ſome other things; bring us that great box. (*To the Marchioneſs.*) Let us ſit down. [*They ſit down.*

Mar. Yes, give it us on our knees—there, that will do. (*The Viſcounteſs and Marchioneſs take variety of millenery out of the box.*)

Viſ. This hat is pretty enough—but 'tis common. Mademoiſelle le Doux, I muſt ſhew you ſomething about hats. I will give you ſome ideas.

M. le Doux. You have ſuch an imagination, madam!

Mar. Here, mademoiſelle, lay all theſe aſide for me.

Viſ. Oh, my love, do have this cap likewiſe; here is the fellow to it, which I ſhall keep.

Mar. Yes, willingly.

Viſ. Excepting the two hats, I take all which remains in the box. Send them to my carriage, mademoiſelle le Doux. [*She takes the box.*

SCENE VIII.

JULIET, MADEMOISELLE LE DOUX, THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS.

Jul. (*To the Viſcounteſs*) THE ſervants deſire to know, madam, when you will pleaſe to have your carriage?

Viſ. Let them wait.—I am juſt going. (*To the March.* (*Apropos*, of that—I muſt tell you a charming ſtory! the Baroneſs was invited yeſterday to a wedding

wedding dinner, where there was a pharaoh-bank; ſhe arrived at two, and, on entering the ſaloon, cooly ordered her carriage at twelve to-day.

Mar. That was very droll indeed!

Viſ. What is leſs ſo, the unfortunate woman has loſt two thouſand guineas; her allowance is only five hundred pounds, and ſhe does not know what to do next. This affair muſt not be mentioned, we have promiſed her ſecrecy.

Jul. (Aſide.) The ſecret is well kept.

Viſ. Were it known, her family would never forgive her.

Mar. Dreadful! *(The Marchioneſs and Viſcountſs whiſper to each other.)*

M. le Doux. (Aſide.) I am glad I know this, I ſhall profit by it. *(Aloud.)* Ladies, have you any further commands?

Mar. Your ſervant mademoiſelle le Doux. Juliet, tell them to admit nobody.—Do you hear?

Jul. Yes, madam. *(She goes out with mademoiſelle le Doux, who carries away her bones.)*

SCENE IX.

THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS.

Mar. I FLATTERED myſelf you would have dined with me, my dear friend.

Viſ. Oh, but I am engaged to a reading, and a party at tea.—Hah, I have forgot my * *parfiler*-bag—how giddy I am!—I ſhall be worn to death. I can't attend to reading without I *parfile*.

* A faſhionable French work: ſee note to *The Spoiled Child*. T.

Mar.

Mar. What work is to be read?

Vif. A poem.

Mar. Oh, the Chevalier d'Herbain's, I dare ſay.

Vif. Yes. He was rather inclined to have it printed; but you know the Chevalier, he has ſuch modeſty, ſuch ſimplicity!—the very name of author, puts him in a dreadful fright—he ſays, he only writes to amuſe his friends.

Mar. Nevertheleſs, I heard him read his poem to ſixty perſons, the other day.

Vif. Oh, to-day we ſhall have above an hundred, but this is owing to his being in ſuch vogue; he has a great many friends.—I am quite ſhocked that you will not go to this reading, my life; do you know that we ſhall ſcarcely ſee each other all day?

Mar. Apropos, tell me, my love, why are you ſo dreſſed this morning?

Vif Becauſe I ſhall not enter my own doors till night. At five, I go to the French play, from thence, I ſhall return and take you to ſee the new ballet; then we will make two or three viſits, and afterwards ſup at the embaſſador's. We ſhall play at pharaoh, which has quite ruined me; but no matter, I have a paſſion for pharaoh, as conſtant as it is unfortunate.—It will end in my renouncing play and the world too: all this annihilates me; really I never feel myſelf tolerable, but with you, or when abſolutely alone; I grow a miſanthrope, I forewarn you of it! if you knew all the ill-treatment I experience—and then, I am affected by a mere nothing. One is greatly to be pitied, for being endued with a certain ſenſibility; 'tis a fatal preſent from heaven.—My love, have you any rouge there? becauſe mine is rather too pale.

Mar.

Mar. Here's some. (*The Viſcounteſs ſits down before the toilette, and puts on rouge.*) 'Pon honour, you are in high beauty this morning, and ſmart enough to ſit for your picture. If madame de Semur ſees you to-day, you will kill her with vexation.

Vif. What a dreadful thing is envy! and how much it diſfigures thoſe who poſſeſs it!

Mar. Aye, very true.——My life, have you thought of our dreſſes for the quadrille?

Vif Yes, my love. Between ourſelves, I think this quadrille of ours will make ſome little noiſe. We are to have ſix more rehearſals, an't we?

Mar. Certainly.

Vif. What think you of madame de Blemont, who miſſed the laſt, that ſhe might go and ſollicit her judges, that ſhe might ſpeak to her *rapporteur*?*

Mar. But they ſay this cauſe is very important; her fortune depends on the deciſion.

Vif. So let it be; but ſtill, ſhe might very well have put off her judges to another day. Madame de Blemont betrays, upon every occaſion, ſuch ruſticity of manners! ſhe has lived a great deal in the country.

Mar. Her relations ſay ſhe has merit.

Vif. It may be ſo; but her merit is not very brilliant ſurely. Have you obſerved how the ſides of her hoop ſeem always dropping off? ſhe has the moſt ſhocking air—I know not why ſhe belongs to our quadrille, ſhe will diſfigure it.

Mar. She does not dance amiſs, and ſhe is pretty.

Vif. Oh, pretty! you are vaſtly good. She may

* *Rapporteur*, or reporting judge. The judge choſen by the contending parties, to examine the evidence, and report the cauſe. T.

have

have been ſo, but ſhe is not young now; and though ſhe owns but four and twenty, is, at leaſt, three years older.—But, my ſweet friend, I muſt leave you.

Mar. What, already?

Viſ. We ſhall ſee each other in the evening. I have a thouſand things to ſay; I want to diſcloſe my heart to my friend. Believe me, I have more than one vexation; and did I not poſſeſs ſo much fortitude—

Mar. You alarm me.

Viſ. I'll tell you every thing at the opera. *A propos*, my dear, ſhall we take that little box? have you determined?

Mar. Why, if it is agreeable to you—

Viſ. It will charm me; it will be a means of my ſeeing you more frequently.

Mar. Well, I have no objection.

Viſ. Good b'y, darling. (*She embraces her.*) This ſhort converſation has done me good. I had the blue-devils, when I came.—Adieu, my dear friend.—Have you ſeen my new carriage?

Mar. No, my love; is it below?

Viſ. Yes, come and ſee it; 'tis raviſhing.

Mar. *Allons*, moſt willingly. (*They go out arm-in-arm.*)

END of the FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE the Firſt.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Mar. GET my green embroidered gown ready, Juliet, I ſhall ſoon dreſs.

Jul. What, madam, to ſup here, *tête-à-tête* with your aunt?

Mar. No, the Viſcounteſs has reminded me, that I have been engaged for this week, to a ſupper at the embaſſador's.

Jul. But you have promiſed madame Doriza to ſtay at home and receive her this evening; ſurely you may give up a ſupper where there will be an hundred perſons; and from which the ſlighteſt excuſe will diſengage you.

Mar. Yes, but the Viſcounteſs would never forgive me.

Jul.

Jul. Your aunt will have much greater cauſe not to forgive you.

Mar. I fear it, for I am perſuaded ſhe will think my reaſon a bad one.

Jul. Oh, moſt wretched indeed!

Mar. This is very embarraſſing.—It would certainly make me miſerable to diſpleaſe my aunt, there is nothing I ſo much dread. But I confeſs, Juliet, the thought of that *tête-à-tête*, which I, this morning, ſo earneſtly deſired, now diſturbs and afflicts me.

Jul. How, is it poſſible?

Mar. This change does not proceed from my heart—at any other time I would renounce all the pleaſures of the world for ſo true a happineſs as that of ſpending an evening alone with my aunt. Certain it is, Juliet, that prudence and wiſdom flow from her lips. With what delight did I liſten to her, while I followed her counſels! ſhe ſtill never fails to perſuade me, but her words now fill my boſom with regret and ſecret ſhame, the bitterneſs of which ſurpaſſes all deſcription. Alas, thoſe only, who have always been exempt from errour, can really feel the charms of virtuous leſſons!

Jul. Formerly, indeed, the repreſenting to you every duty of a woman was no more than drawing an exact picture of your own life.

Mar. Ah, Juliet! how could I neglect and loſe ſuch happineſs?

Jul. You will recover it; and by experience gain another virture, namely, diſtruſt of yourſelf. (*A valet-de-chambre enters.*)

Mar. What do you want?

Valet-de-chambre. A painter, madam, has brought you three portraits.

Mar.

Mar. Very well, I know what they are. Go and put them into my cloſet with the others. (*The valet-de-chambre goes out.*)

Jul. Nine, and three, are twelve.—People ſeldom have any portraits but of their intimate friends; conſequently, madam, you have twelve intimate friends; I wiſh you joy.

Mar. No, I have no intimate friend but the Viſcounteſs, the others are only acquaintance.

Jul. However, I ſee you pay all theſe ladies the ſame attention, and treat them all nearly in the ſame manner: they are on the private liſt; you load them with careſſes, write to them on the ſhorteſt abſence; when you meet them, you have always ſome ſecrets to impart; if one of them is ill, you ſeem to experience the greateſt uneaſineſs, and haſten to confine yourſelf with her; and if this is not friendſhip, madam, what name can be given to ſuch demonſtrations? Ah, my dear lady! permit me to ſay, that your mind and underſtanding ſhould preſerve you from the abſurdity of following this ridiculous faſhion, and make you deſpiſe theſe frivolous, childiſh affectations. Pardon my zeal, it tranſports me; but it is my duty to tell you the truth, and I believe you are worthy of hearing it.

Mar. You are not miſtaken, Juliet; I, at leaſt, know how to value your friendſhip and advice; nay, believe me, there are moments, in which I am full as much diſguſted as you can be with the follies you deſcribe. I diſlike my way of life; but it has unhappily brought me into a habit of laſſitude and idleneſs; I have loſt my taſte for employment; I have neglected the cultivation of thoſe talents which uſed to procure me ſo much applauſe, and I am terrified at thinking what pains,

what

what time it muſt coſt, before I can regain my former ſtate. This, I own, deters me.

Jul. True, madam, if you heſitate much longer, your reſolution to reſume your ſtudies may come too late. But do you really think that eighteen months of idleneſs can have deſtroyed the fruits of fifteen years labour and application? In ſhort, madam, if your head were turned by the diſſipation in which you live, if you found no happineſs comparable to that of paying viſits, going to publick places, and playing at pharaoh, I ſhould then think it would be very painful for you to make ſuch a ſacrifice to reaſon; but the world fatigues and tires you to death.

Mar. That is frequently the caſe, to be ſure.—But notwithſtanding I have naturally as much averſion as I have contempt for coquetry, ſtill, I am not always wholly inſenſible to the delight of pleaſing.

Jul. Very well, I underſtand. You are not averſe to ſhewing yourſelf, and remarking that you are thought pretty: is it not ſo?

Mar. Yes; and yet the pleaſure is ſo tranſient, ſo ſpiritleſs!

Jul. Aye, no doubt of that! for however ſmall your portion of ſelf-love may be, ſtill, you ſhare the triumph with ſo many others, that it cannot ſatisfy you. I muſt tell you ſomething which I heard a few days ago, relative to this ſubject; it was at the embaſſador's grand entertainment, whither you went with the Viſcounteſs. You both attracted a great deal of notice. I was in the crowd, and heard the obſervations which were made on each; nor will I heſitate to ſay, that they were almoſt wholly to the Viſcounteſs's advantage. You were compared with each other;

and your friend, from the regularity, elegance, and grandeur of her figure, was univerſally preferred: this quite provoked me; becauſe I, Madam, think you the handſomer. But my indignation was ſoon rouſed a ſecond time, for ſuddenly, near the group of gentlemen, to whoſe converſation I was attending, comes by and ſtops, that bride, who is always ſo dreſſed out, ſo plain, and ſo affected; I do not recollect her name—

Mar. Madame d'Ervignac?

Jul. The ſame. Well then, madame d'Ervignac, after having ſhewn theſe gentlemen a hundred affected airs, each more diſguſting than the other, and twiſted her head about, you know how, followed her mother-in-law into another room, and left my company in ſuch admiration of her charms that they could do nothing elſe but praiſe her. They extolled her air, her features; and unanimouſly agreed ſhe was a thouſand times more agreeable, more captivating, (pardon my ſincerity) than you, madam, or even than the Viſcounteſs Dorothea, whom they juſt before had thought ſo charming.

Mar. This is incredible; madame d'Ervignac is really ugly.

Jul. Oh, I grant it; but my ſtory is not the leſs true for all that. I was with the embaſſador's *Maître-d'hôtel* *, who enjoyed the converſation very much.

Mar. I dare anſwer for it, your group was compoſed of the worſt company.

Jul. They were gentlemen, madam, whom I have often ſeen at your houſe; namely, Viſcount d'Elbi and his brother, M. de Royanne, the Chevalier d'Herbain, and five or ſix others.

Mar. Was the Chevalier d'Herbain among them?

* Houſe ſteward. T.

Jul.

Jul. Yes, indeed, madam: he was, at first, one of the Viſcounteſs's greateſt admirers; and afterwards, of madame d'Ervignac's, notwithſtanding all the ſilly things he ſometimes ſays at your toilette: but this, madam, is the way with men in general, therefore it is unfortunate to ſet a high value on beauty. Let a woman be ever ſo handſome, ſhe may poſſibly be eclipſed by another; and, what is a ſtill greater mortification, yet very uſual, ſhe may ſee an indifferent figure preferred to her own. Conſequently, univerſal admiration of this kind, is a chimera; caprice, without judgement, beſtows it to-day, and withdraws it to-morrow. But the triumph, which depends neither on whim nor faſhion, and which, at all times, and all ages, can really ſatisfy ſelf-love, is that of attaching others by good temper and good conduct; that of pleaſing by ſweetneſs of manners, underſtanding, and the charms of the mind.

Mar. Well, Juliet, I am now determined to reſume my ſtudies; I'll begin to-morrow. Get the harp and *piano forte* into tune; prepare my eaſel and colours; put all the hiſtorical books, which my aunt gave me, into my library, and burn all the romances.

Jul. Oh, what an excellent reſolution, provided it be laſting!

Mar. Never doubt it.—But what does he want with us?

A footman enters and ſpeaks to the Marchioneſs. Madam, that poor woman, who comes from one of your eſtates, and was here yeſterday, begs to ſpeak with you.

Mar. Tell her to wait. [*The footman goes out.*

Jul. I dare ſay it is that woman whoſe houſe was burnt.

Mar. Alas, yes!—ſhe ſtands in great need of aſſiſtance; and how unfortunate am I in being unable, at this moment, to alleviate her diſtreſſes!

Jul. Goodneſs of heart, without a prudent œconomy, can only produce fruitleſs regrets, as you experience, madam; prodigality and beneficence cannot go together.

Mar. On reflexion, I will play at pharaoh this evening; if I win, I ſhall have the pleaſure of extricating this poor woman from her difficulties.

Jul. And if you loſe?

Mar. Oh, I am certain I ſhall win; my motive will bring me good luck.

Jul. By relieving this woman you will do an action ſatisfactory to yourſelf, but not really commendable.

Mar. How ſo?

Jul. Have you no creditors?—Can we be truly generous without being juſt?—Are we permitted to enjoy the exalted pleaſure of beſtowing, if we know not how to pay our debts?

Mar. Ah, Juliet, this is but too certain! and ſeverely do you make me feel the horrours of my ſituation! What! can I only offer the unfortunate a compaſſion uſeleſs to them, and heart-rending to me? Then I muſt ſteel my boſom againſt pity; I muſt repulſe ſo natural an emotion, or, at leaſt, not yield to it. What would be virtue in another, would, in me, be weakneſs. I have debts, and ought to pay them; this is my firſt duty, I know, I feel it; but at any rate I muſt aſſiſt the poor woman. Acquaint yourſelf fully with her ſituation, Juliet.—Somebody is coming; how ſorry I am, that I did not order myſelf to be denied!

Jul. But it is the Viſcounteſs.

Mar.

Mar. Every thing is now a burden to me. (*Juliet goes out.*)

SCENE II.

THE VISCOUNTESS, THE MARCHIONESS.

Vif. HOW, my love, not dreſſed yet? what lazineſs!—

Mar. I have a ſtrange head-ach.

Vif. You muſt go out, that will cure you.—pharaoh will take it off, I am certain.

Mar. Indeed, I can't poſſibly dreſs and ſup out.

Vif. But what will the embaſſador ſay?

Mar. Would not you, my love, make proper apologies for me?

Vif. I am much inclined to break my engagement likewiſe, eſpecially, as I don't feel at all clever to-day!—My nerves are quite unſtrung;—beſides, my hair is moſt horridly dreſſed.—Come, I'll keep you company, let us chat, let us go to bed early; it will be a great deal better.

Mar. I am exceſſively concerned, but I cannot aſk you to ſupper; for, as I am to be at home, my aunt will certainly ſpend the evening here.

Vif. 'Pon honour, there is ſomething quite new in this proceeding. I engage myſelf to the embaſſador's ſupper, merely that I may have the pleaſure of meeting you; you do not chooſe to go, I conſent; but you muſt be kind enough to admit me as well as your aunt; this ſeems but fair.

Mar. Why you will be tired to death.

Vif. To be ſure your aunt will not enliven me; ſhe is very reſpectable, no doubt, but ſhe has an auſterity of manner, which quite annihilates me, I confeſs. I dare ſay, I am no favourite of hers.

Mar. What an idea!

Vif. I am certain of it: all the aunts and mothers-in-law, take an averſion to me at firſt ſight. But do obſerve, an excellent thought has juſt ſtruck me: we muſt abſolutely paſs the evening together, becauſe, joking apart, I really have the moſt important things in the world to tell you. My ſcheme is this; you ſhall write to your aunt, and let her know that I am ill, and that I have deſired the favour of you to come and ſup with me.

Mar. Excuſe this artifice; I have made a reſolution never to deceive a perſon to whom I owe ſo much gratitude and love.

Vif. A fine expreſſion that, but devoid of common ſenſe: there is no artifice in the caſe, for I declare I am very ill, and I inſiſt upon your ſupping with me; therefore you will only tell the truth.

Mar. How fooliſh!—You are not ill.

Vif. Did I not juſt now complain of my nerves? Beſides, the quantity of tea I drank this morning has made me quite ſick.—In ſhort, to quiet your conſcience, I'll touch nothing the whole evening, but orange-flower water. Are you ſatisfied now? or have you any remaining ſcruples?—You ſmile. Well, I underſtand that ſimper as a conſent. Give me this proof of friendſhip, my love, I conjure you. (*She embraces her.*) I ſhall be truly ſenſible of it.—I wiſh to aſk your advice, to entruſt

truſt you with all my ſorrows.—You ſhall guide me, you ſhall conſole me; I cannot defer this interview, for my circumſtances are truly urgent; I am obliged to reſolve, and your opinion only can determine me.

Mar. You are not to be reſiſted. Well, I'll go and write to my aunt; though this falſhood coſts me dear, I muſt acknowledge.

Viſ. Pho, ſhe will never know it.

Mar. That is impoſſible; for I ſhall certainly tell her to-morrow.

Viſ. How fooliſh this is!—Where's your writing-caſe?

Mar. Here.

Viſ. Come, write, my love. (*The Marchioneſs ſits down and writes; the Viſcounteſs, in the mean while, views herſelf in a looking-glaſs, and adjuſts her dreſs.*) What a blowzy figure I am!—I muſt have my coach-ſeat made ſtill lower.—My love, do you like the colour of my gown?—I think it is rather too faint.—Beſides, the trimming is not quite the thing.—However, it was done by mademoiſelle le Doux. Oh, my love! *à propos* of mademoiſelle le Doux, how could I forget to inform you of an affair, with which I am really affected to the very bottom of my ſoul?

Mar. What is it?

Viſ. You know my ſenſibility, judge then of the vexation I muſt experience. You recollect the ſtory I told you this morning about the Baroneſs, before mademoiſelle le Doux.

Mar. Yes, reſpecting the two thouſand guineas loſt at pharoah.

Viſ. Well, then: this poor Baroneſs owes a great deal of money to mademoiſelle le Doux, who, fearing from the hints I dropped, that ſhe ſhould not be

paid, went to the Baroneſs's relations, and told them the whole ſtory.

Mar. Dreadful!

Viſ. To complete her misfortunes, the Baroneſs has a mother-in-law, who plays at nothing but * *loto*; and a father-in-law, who plays only at chefs; ſo, to them, her offence ſeemed an unpardonable crime. The family called a council, and talked of a two years abſence, of her ſetting out for an old caſtle, in the moſt remote part of Limouſin—of her ſpending two ſummers there;—in ſhort, ſuch horrours as I will not relate, for they make one ſhudder. In the midſt of all theſe manœuvres, the Baroneſs, in deſpair, wrote me an account of this ſhocking buſineſs.

Mar. And did ſhe know you were the cauſe of her misfortune?

Viſ. Oh, yes, mademoiſelle le Doux had taken care of that, inſomuch that her note has pierced my very ſoul. I went directly to the Baroneſs, with a deſign of perſuading her to deny every thing to her family, for I would have engaged to provide all the money ſhe wanted; but ſhe had been ſo open in her confeſſions, that we could not make uſe of this expedient. I then went to her mother-in-law, took all the blame upon myſelf, told her I had drawn-in the Baroneſs, and was alone guilty of her fault. In ſhort, I pleaded with ſuch eloquence, that I obtained her pardon. True, indeed, the Baroneſs is never to ſee me again; that is one of the articles of reconciliation; but I ſubmit without uneaſineſs, ſince it inſures her tranquillity.

Mar. A very diſagreeable adventure!

* A game much played at Paris. T.

Viſ.

Vif. I am the more unpardonable for having mentioned it before mademoiſelle le Doux, becauſe I was aware that ſhe knew the Baroneſs; for I have ſeen her at the houſe twenty times, but my head is always ſo taken up, ſo full of buſineſs, and that makes me ſo abſent —

Mar. I ſuppoſe, my love, after what has happened, you will leave mademoiſelle le Doux?

Vif. Oh, I'm exceſſively enraged againſt her. She has certainly drawn me into a moſt dreadful ſcrape; but, to do her juſtice, nobody but herſelf knows how to make *pouffs*, or trim a ball-dreſs.

Mar. Who comes to interrupt us?

Vif. It is Juliet.

SCENE III.

THE VISCOUNTESS, THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Jul. MADAM, I came to acquaint you, that madame Doriza is this inſtant arrived and gone into your mother-in-law's apartment; ſhe will certainly be here in a moment to ſee you; what muſt I ſay to her?

Mar. Then the note I had begun is uſeleſs. You ſee, my life, our ſcheme muſt be given up; for I will not ſhut my door againſt her, I am determined.

Vif. Why renounce our ſcheme? you may tell her, what you would otherwiſe have written.

Mar. To tell a lye is much more difficult than to write one.

Vif. Pho! ſuch cowardice! when the thing is

decided, what ſignifies the manner? I perceive you are rather weak than ſcrupulous. Come, come, have a character of your own, you are too ſenſible to be ſo very irreſolute.

Mar. But my aunt has ſeen your carriage: how can I tell her you are ill?

Vif. Go down to your mother-in-law's apartment, and ſay, that, in order to ſee you the ſooner, I have ſent my coach for you; nothing is eaſier. I will remain here till your aunt goes.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) This is called genius, invention!

Vif. Come, my dear friend, loſe no time.

Mar. Really, by doing this, I give you a great proof of friendſhip.

Vif. Think, then, how happy we ſhall be all the evening—at liberty to converſe with the greateſt freedom, ſure of meeting with no interruption—but make haſte; come, go down.

Mar. My love, what advantage you take of my *exceſſive tenderneſs!*—Well, your ſervant; for it muſt always end in doing every thing you deſire.

[*She goes out.*

SCENE IV.

THE VISCOUNTESS, JULIET.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) WHAT a pretty humour this puts me into!—(*Aloud to the Viſcounteſs.*) Do you want any thing, madam?

Vif. Only your company, mademoiſelle Juliet; I would not have you go away.

Jul. You do me too much honour, madam.

Vif. You love your lady to diſtraction, that is a ſtrong

a ſtrong title to my regard.—You were brought up with her?

Jul. Yes; to madame Doriza's goodneſs I owe every thing.

Viſ. That ſame madame Doriza is a very worthy woman—you do honour to her care.—You are an orphan, I think?

Jul. No, madam; I am bleſſed with parents, whom I love, and who, from their virtues, are worthy of all my tenderneſs. The education I received (though ſo much ſuperiour to my ſphere of life) far from making me ſet myſelf up above them, has, in this point, only ſerved the better to teach me my duty, and to render ſuch pleaſing ties as dear, as they are reſpectable and ſacred.

Viſ. What a good, what a charming diſpoſition!—'Tis odd, but ſhe has brought tears into my eyes. Well, now I really love madame Doriza, who has given you theſe excellent principles.

Jul. They are connected with the moſt natural ſentiments, and may be found in every heart; a bad education blaſts, while a good one alone conſiſts in unfolding them.

Viſ. I could liſten to her a whole day with pleaſure.—Indeed, Juliet, you ſurprize me, and moſt exceſſively too, 'pon honour.—I feel a real impulſe of friendſhip for her.—Juliet, I muſt embrace you.

Jul. Madam!—

Viſ. She is charming!—ſuch gentleneſs of manners, ſuch modeſty, ſuch goodneſs of heart!—Her parents are extremely happy.—I really cannot get the better of the tender emotions ſhe has occaſioned. Pray, Juliet, tell me, have you not ſpent near two years in the country with madame

de Germini? You must have been a great comfort to her, for I should think living at an old mansion must be a very *triste* affair.

Jul. My lady there was happy, there she only met with natural pleasures, but of such we never tire.

Vis. Yes, I conceive that.——I also love the country.—I have by nature a rural taste.——Rivers, meadows, flowers, are ravishing objects; but when all these are frozen, in winter, what is to be done then?

Jul. Musick, drawing, reading, employed us part of the day; and of an evening, my lady, surrounded by her family, never wished for the entertainments, balls, and pleasures of Paris.

Vis. There is nobody more amiable than madame de Germini; but she is not lively.

Jul. She was so at that time.

Vis. True, she had then no cares, no uneasiness; her health was better.—She is much altered within this year; she alarms me.—I have been told her affairs are deranged.

Jul. No, madam, I am confident they are in an excellent situation; my lady, on all points, is so reasonable!—

Vis. I believe she is greatly indebted to your advice.

Jul. She does not want it; her conduct is so good!—

Vis. (*With emphasis.*) She really is a charming woman!—I have such an *attachment* to her! she is *so alluring* to me!—She inspires me with a *something so lively, so tender*, that it absolutely amounts to *passion:* besides, there is such conformity in our *habits*, such *sympathy* between us, that

that it is impoſſible but we ſhould love each other to diſtraction.

Jul. (Aſide.) So, now we are got into all the nonſenſe of exaggeration, and ſenſibility!

Viſ. But don't I hear a carriage drive out of the court?

Jul. Very probably it is madame Doriza gone away.

Viſ. Do, my dear Juliet, go and tell me.

Jul. Oh, here is my lady.

Viſ. The viſit has been a ſhort one.

SCENE V.

THE VISCOUNTESS, THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Viſ. WELL! how have you managed?

Mar. (Sorrowfully.) As we agreed; I told my aunt the ſtory you invented; ſhe ſeemed to believe every word, aſked me not a ſingle queſtion, and went away directly.

Viſ. Excellent! our evening will be delicious.—I have ſtill ſome buſineſs which I muſt finiſh, ſo adieu, for the preſent; but I'll ſoon return.—Your ſervant, my dear.—*A propos*, do you know that I love Juliet to diſtraction? We have juſt had a very ſerious converſation—ſhe has charmed me; I envy your happineſs in having ſuch an amiable perſon about you.—Only ſee how ſhe bluſhes—worthy, ſenſible, modeſt; ſhe is deficient in no one good quality.

Mar. Notwithſtanding what you have ſeen, you muſt know her more intimately to perceive and value all her perfections.

Viſ.

Vif. Oh, I ſhall willingly believe every thing in her favour.—But I am obliged to force myſelf away.

Mar. Whither are you going?

Vif. To ſome ſhops; will you go with me?

Mar. No; I have too bad a head-ach.

Vif. For my part, I am ſo worn down with the fatigues of the day.—And, then, think of all that I am obliged to do to-morrow.—At twelve, our experiments on fixed air; at one, the race; from thence, to the French academy, to hear the ſpeech at the reception; then, to the fair, to ſee the dancing dogs; and then, to Verſailles.—Poſitively, I cannot conceive how, with my delicate and tender health, and my irritability of nerves, I can have ſtrength to lead ſuch a kind of life.

Mar. It is apparently agreeable to you, ſince you have adopted it.

Vif. No—'tis owing to my exceſſive complaiſance—for naturally, I am lazy. The Chevalier d'Herbain, in ſpeaking of me, ſaid, that I had vivacity only in my imagination, and *energy* only in my character. This is ſtrictly true; this deſcribes me exactly; I love tranquillity, calmneſs, recollection; what a delicious thing is quiet!—But who can follow their own inclinations?—(*She looks at her watch.*) Bleſs me! a quarter paſſed ſix!—Adieu, my dear friend; I ſhall be here in an hour and a half at furtheſt. (*She embraces her, and advances a few ſteps.*) Oh! I forgot.—My love, who makes your *chambrelouques?*

Jul. Madame Bertrand.

Vif. Well, Juliet, you ſhall ſend her to me—and preſently, when I return, I'll undreſs, and you ſhall lend me one. A *chambrelouque* is the happineſs

pineſs of life!—Adieu, my ſweet love. (*She embraces the Marchioneſs again, and goes away.*)

SCENE VI.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Jul. (*After a ſhort ſilence, during which time the Marchioneſs appears very thoughtful.*) YOU are thoughtful, madam; 'tis a pity, for your abſence of mind has made you loſe a delightful elogium on *chambrelouques*, and a perfect definition of happineſs.

Mar. (*Speaking to herſelf.*) I am ſure my aunt perceived that I told a lye: it muſt have been written on my countenance.—Alas, what pain does all this give me! how perplexed, melancholy, and unfortunate I am!—To-day, every thing unites to afflict me. On returning from my mother-in-law's apartment, I met that poor woman in my anti-chamber: ſhe threw herſelf at my feet with her children; ſhe has diſtreſſed me beyond meaſure.—I have told her to wait.—Juliet, I abſolutely muſt relieve her.

Jul. But it cannot be done under twenty pounds, madam; for, if ſhe has not that ſum this evening, by to-morrow's dawn her huſband will be dragged away to priſon.

Mar. (*Untying her necklace.*) Well, go and ſell this diamond heart, which coſt ſixty guineas; you may certainly get twenty for it. Go, loſe not an inſtant.

Jul. But I don't know any jeweller, madam. (*The Marchioneſs, with impatience.*) Give it to me, I'll go myſelf.—Order the carriage.

Jul.

Jul. The coachman is gone out, madam, for you ſaid you ſhould not want him.—Beſides, it is a holiday, and all the ſhops are ſhut.

Mar. (*Angrily.*) The real difficulty is your want of zeal—that, betrays itſelf on every occaſion, excepting when you wiſh to ſay harſh things, to afflict me, and make me feel how much I am to be pitied. Arguments, ill-humour, and bluntneſs, are what you call affection. I will have no more lectures; I will have no more anſwers; and, if this does not pleaſe you, leave my ſervice; you are at liberty.

Jul. No, madam, I am not: your aunt, placed me here, and deſired me, in return for her goodneſs, to remain with you: therefore, I muſt ſuſtain your anger, your ill-uſage, nay, even your hatred, without having the reſource of a common ſervant, the poſſibility of quitting my place. I can forbear to come into your preſence without orders; but if I leave your houſe, madam, I muſt abſolutely be driven from it by you.

[*She goes out.*

SCENE VII.

THE MARCHIONESS, *alone.*

(*She throws herſelf into a chair, and ſpeaks after a ſhort ſilence.*)

HOW ſevere was her reproach!—What! inſult a perſon who has devoted her life to me!—take advantage of her ſituation, her attachment—her attachment! can I flatter myſelf with inſpiring any? Ah, doubtleſs, her obligations to my aunt, alone retain her in my ſervice!—Has ſhe not told me ſo? She uſed to love me on my own account.—

But

But how can we preſerve the regard of thoſe about us, if we loſe the virtues which attached them?—What an overwhelming reflexion!—There is not now one perſon left, to whom I can intruſt my ſorrows.—My aunt!—I have deſpiſed her advice, and blaſted her expectations.—I ſtill could have recourſe to her pity; but I would be indebted to her tenderneſs alone, and that, I deſerve to loſe for ever. Then, he, whom I have hitherto found the moſt amiable and indulgent of friends, what will he think at his return?—How ſhall I be able to ſupport his preſence, his too juſt reproaches? and how can I endure life without his eſteem?—Oh, heaven! into what an abyſs am I plunged!—My real, my only friends, forſake and abandon me. What remains?—trifling connexions which have ſerved but to miſlead my ſteps.—To myſelf, I appear a ſolitary being—every thing at once unites to overwhelm, and drive me to deſpair. (*She again throws herſelf into a ſeat.*)

SCENE VIII.

THE MARCHIONESS, A VALET-DE-CHAMBRE.

Mar. SOMEBODY is coming—let me, if poſſible, conceal this dreadful agitation.—(*She riſes.*) What do you want?

Valet. Madam, here are ſome letters by the penny-poſt.

Mar. Opens and runs them over. (*Aſide.*) Theſe are three creditors whom I had forgot.—Complaints, threats.—How humiliating!——(*To the valet-de-chambre.*) What do you do there? leave me.

Valet.

Valet. Madam,—why I wiſh—

Mar. What?

Valet. That you would pleaſe, madam, to ſettle part of my account.

Mar. At this moment, it is impoſſible.

Valet. As you had juſt given twenty pounds to the woman whoſe houſe was burnt, I thought—

Mar. I!—I have given her nothing; unfortunately, I cannot relieve her.

Valet. My lady is to ſay what ſhe pleaſes; but the woman is juſt gone; ſhe told me of your generoſity, and ſhewed me the money.

Mar. How!—this is not true.

Val. She did ſay, you deſired it might not be known; but ſhe intruſted the ſecret with la Pierre and me, madam.

Mar. Oh, heaven! what am I about to diſcover?—Call Juliet hither.

Valet. Yes, madam.——Here is my account, madam, which I beg you will pleaſe to look over; and recollect that I have a wife and five children, who intirely depend on me for ſupport.

Mar. I will pay attention to it, I promiſe you; but go, and call Juliet hither immediately; go. (*The Valet-de-chambre goes out. The Marchioneſs continues ſpeaking.*) Juliet!—yes, Juliet is capable of it—at the very moment too, when I was treating her with ſo much injuſtice!—Oh, how impatient I am to atone for my faults!—But ſhe is not coming; I'll go and find her—I think I hear her—yes, 'tis ſhe.

SCENE

SCENE IX.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Mar. JULIET, you have relieved that poor woman in my name; you have ſtripped yourſelf of all you had, to ſpare me the ſhame and ſorrow of abandoning this unfortunate poor creature.

Jul. Bleſs me! who has told you that, madam?

Mar. (*Embracing her with tranſport.*) I have gueſſed; my heart is, at leaſt, capable of reading, and valuing yours.

Jul. What I have done has nothing at all extraordinary in it: I had the money, which my father and mother can do without; therefore, I gave it, in your name, to the woman; but I added, that you enjoined her to ſtrict ſecrecy.

Mar. Thus, Juliet, you hoped to conceal from my knowledge ſo juſt a call for gratitude.—Of what happineſs did you wiſh to rob me!—and though I muſt not attribute an action, ſo noble, ſo affecting, to your friendſhip for me, though you have told me, Juliet, that the ſole motive which governs you is attachment to my aunt, ſtill, I do not love you the leſs on that account, nor have I the leſs pleaſure in admiring your virtues.

Jul. Ah, madam! my zeal may ſometimes betray me into raſhneſs and indiſcretion. I feel it, I confeſs it; but I flattered myſelf the cauſe was to you ſo well known, that you would always deign to excuſe the effect. No, madam, I dare affirm, that when you ſeem to doubt my heart, you are not ſincere. No, I never can perſuade myſelf that you are capable of ſo great an act of injuſtice.

Mar.

Mar. (*Very much affected.*) Juliet, my dear Juliet! then you ſtill love me?

Jul. Love you!—Oh, madam! ſince you allow of that expreſſion, I love you as I ought to love a benefactreſs, a ſiſter, and the firſt object of my tenderneſs. Conſider, madam, we are not yet two and twenty, and I have loved you fifteen years. Every thing which affects you, to me becomes perſonal, your troubles are mine; I am proud of your ſucceſs and afflicted by your faults; for all my happineſs depends on your good conduct and reputation. Deſtined from infancy, to conſecrate my life to you, owing every thing to your family and your kindneſs, could I, madam, without the baſeſt ingratitude, have other ſentiments?

Mar. (*Embracing her.*) Alas, why am I not worthy of ſuch a friend?—Pardon my faults and my injuſtice, I deteſt them. Ah, Juliet!—diſquietude and vexation have dreadfully altered my temper; I feel it but too ſenſibly. My ſituation, I confeſs, overwhelms me; I ſee no reſource, and all my courage fails.

Jul. Irreſolution and weakneſs aggravate every evil. It is above ſix months, madam, ſince you have repented and thought of putting your affairs into order, without poſſeſſing ſufficient fortitude to execute ſo laudable a deſign. At firſt, the means were eaſier. The more you heſitate, the more your difficulties increaſe.

Mar. But how is ſuch a chaos to be reduced into order? Where can I begin?

Jul. By knowing the exact amount of your debts.

Mar. Alas! I ſhall know that to-day; I have received a note from the man whom I intruſted with

with this inquiry, and he acquaints me that he will come at eight o'clock this evening, to return me an anſwer.

Jul. Pray, madam, can you nearly gueſs what you owe?

Mar. Alas, almoſt ſeventeen hundred pounds, as I am much afraid. In ſhort, I will make an intire reformation; I will give up my allowance, I can do without any thing.—Ah, may I be able at that price to atone for my errours!

Jul. At eight o'clock this evening you will know the ſituation of your affairs; but the Viſcounteſs will be with you, madam.

Mar. How ſhall I get rid of her?—She will wiſh to ſtay late; and, circumſtanced as I am, her company will be ſo wearing!—I have a mind to write, and ſay I cannot receive her.

Jul. That will be of no uſe; ſhe would take no denial.

Mar. (*Pettiſhly.*) Still, it is dreadful to be ſo exceſſively teazed by a perſon whom one does not love; or who is, at leaſt, too giddy to inſpire a tender affection.

Jul. Whom one does not love!—You have ſaid it; madam, the expreſſion has eſcaped you.—However, ſhe would not be denied, and ſhe would indeed be juſtified.—Obſerve the inconvenience of giving all the privileges of friendſhip to *a perſon whom one does not love.* By your demonſtrations, you have contracted, with her and the world, an engagement which you cannot ſuddenly relinquiſh, without being accuſed of inconſiſtency and bad behaviour. You cannot poſſibly break with her, you can only be eſtranged by degrees.

Mar. How could I form ſuch a connexion?

Jul. You do not love each other, therefore time will eaſily diſengage you. But to return to your affairs. With your permiſſion, madam, I will be your repreſentative this evening; I will ſee the man whom you have deſired to examine them; and, when the Viſcounteſs takes her leave, I will acquaint you with the particulars of our converſation.

Mar. Do ſo. I'll go and look for ſome papers which I forgot to deliver up, and you ſhall give him thoſe likewiſe.—How I dread his information!—Tell me nothing, dear Juliet, till after the Viſcounteſs is gone; for I would, if poſſible, conceal diſtreſſes from her, which I can intruſt to you only.—Aſſure this man, my dear friend, aſſure him, that, if he can bring me out of this dreadful labyrinth, without M. de Germini's or my aunt's knowledge, I ſhall owe him more than life itſelf; I ſhall think myſelf indebted to him for honour. He has given me this hope, if my debts do not exceed ſeventeen hundred pounds. Remind him of it.

Jul. Believe me, I will forget nothing, madam.

Mar. Repeat to him, that I will give up my allowance for the neceſſary time, and ſign an engagement for that purpoſe. He has great obligations to my family, make the moſt of them; in ſhort, tell him, he is my only hope, my laſt reſource.

Jul. Can you, madam, thus apply to a ſtranger, when you have an aunt—

Mar. I only aſk that ſtranger to lend me a part of the money which I want, and I offer to pay him intereſt. The ſum will not be very conſiderable after all; for I have many creditors who will allow me time.

Jul. I believe ſo; they have cheated you enough to afford it. You have never examined, nor ſettled an account; you know the price of nothing; you have bought every thing on credit; theſe, are the principal cauſes of your embarraſſed ſituation. But let us ſpeak no more about it, let us forget the paſt, and think only of the future.

Mar. Oh, Juliet! if I am enabled to pay my debts, do you ſuppoſe I can ever contract freſh ones?

Jul. If I thought, after the leſſon you have received, madam, that you could be capable of ſuch a fault, I ſhould regard you as the moſt exravagant and contemptible of women. Judge, then, whether I can harbour ſuch an idea.

Mar. Oh, Juliet! you ſee into the bottom of my ſoul.—When we have felt the full extent of our errours, when we have lamented them ſincerely, it is impoſſible to relapſe. However, let us loſe no time, but look for thoſe papers, before the Viſcounteſs returns.—Come, dear Juliet; come into my cloſet. (*She takes her under the arm, and both go out.*)

END of the SECOND ACT.

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE the Firſt.

JULIET, *alone.*

TWO thouſand nine hundred pounds!—ſhe owes two thouſand nine hundred pounds!—Alas, in what a ſtate would ſhe now be, were ſhe acquainted with this afflicting news!—The man, on whom ſhe had ſuch dependence, I have found ſo reſerved, ſo cold!——However, I have juſt written madame Doriza this melancholy intelligence; and of her generoſity I entertain no doubts; but moſt of theſe bills muſt be paid immediately, will that be in her power?—My unhappy lady, into what a ſnare has ſhe been drawn!—her ſituation renders her a thouſand times more dear to me than ever. When ſhe was happy, how far was I from knowing the ſtrength of my attachment to her!—

As

As yet, ſhe ſuſpects nothing; but is ſupping quietly with the Viſcounteſs. I ſaw her for a moment ſince this painful converſation; but I put on ſo compoſed a countenance, that, far from diſcovering any thing diſtreſſing in it, I thought I could obſerve ſhe conceived flattering hopes.—Her aunt, her worthy aunt, will not forſake her, I am certain.—But two thouſand nine hundred pounds, can ſhe command ſo large a ſum?—If ſhe muſt look for it elſewhere, and have recourſe to monied men, the ſecret will be divulged, and diſcovery is what I dread.—I think I hear ſomebody.—Alas, it is my miſtreſs!—I expect madame Doriza's anſwer; and, in the mean time, let me, if poſſible, diſſemble.

SCENE II.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Mar. THE Viſcounteſs is writing a note in my room, and I ſeize this moment to ſpeak one word to my dear Juliet; I do not wiſh to aſk any queſtions—but, juſt now, you appeared ſatisfied.

Jul. I conjure you, for your own ſake, madam, diſcover no uneaſineſs, no inquietude to the Viſcounteſs: you know how very indiſcreet ſhe is. Command yourſelf; do not give way to ſorrow.—(*She takes her hand and kiſſes it.*) My dear lady!—Your pardon, madam!—(*Aſide.*) I cannot conceal my grief!—

Mar. Juliet—you weep!—Alas, I am undone!—I perceive there are no reſources.

Jul. Oh! what is it I have ſaid?—Take courage,

madam, your affairs are not desperate—no, believe me, this very day will terminate your distresses, I hope—nay, I am certain of it.

Mar. Is it possible? But why those tears I saw you shed?

Jul. It was a moment of tenderness, which I could not resist—but I promise you, I am easy—yes, indeed I am.

Mar. You would not deceive me?

Jul. (*Aside.*) Alas!—(*Aloud.*) All I can tell you is, that I am not yet perfectly informed as to your affairs; the man, to whom you committed the examination, has not yet been able fully to execute his commission; however, I have given him your papers, and to-morrow morning you will have a final and determinate answer.

Mar. But has he, at least, given you any hopes?

Jul. Mine are sanguine, and, I believe, well founded.

Mar. Oh, Juliet! you restore me to life!

Jul. Then resume your cheerfulness, that the Viscountess may not have any suspicion; pray, madam, let her see no change in your behaviour.—Secrecy is so essential!

Mar. I will restrain myself, I promise you, but the effort costs me dear.—Now that my eyes are fully opened, if you knew how troublesome I think her, how foolish, inconsistent, and ridiculous she appears—and how plainly I perceive that she never loved me!—But hush—I think I hear her.

Jul. Yes, 'tis she.

SCENE

Vif. That's impoſſible; 'tis above an hour ſince we ſupped. *(She looks at her watch.)* It is but three quarters after ten, indeed.

Mar. At what time have you ordered your carriage?

Vif. At one.

Mar. *(Aſide.)* How teazing!

Vif. But my coachman is ſo impunctual, that I dare ſay he'll not be here before two.

Mar. *(Aſide.)* Quite agreeable!

Vif. What's the matter, my love? you ſeem unwell.

Mar. Yes, my head-ach increaſes very much.

Vif. And for my part, working makes my eyes ach.—I have got the fidgets. *(They both get up.)*

SCENE IV.

THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS, JULIET.

Jul. to the Vif. MADAM—

Vif. Well, Juliet?

Jul. A perſon, in the other room, deſires to ſpeak with you, madam.

Vif. With me?

Jul. Yes, madam.

Vif. At ſuch an hour; this is extraordinary. Well, I'll go.

SCENE V.

THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Mar. I HAVE a moment's reſpite, however.—Oh, I am tired to death.

Jul. I foreſaw that your converſation would be very inſipid.

Mar. And this mad whim of ſtaying here, at work, till two in the morning, without ſaying a word, is really inconceivable.

Jul. By ſitting up ſo late, ſhe will not riſe to-morrow before noon; dinner and her toilette will employ her till the time of going into publick; and then, the day will be gone.—If ſhe went to bed early, what would ſhe do with her mornings?

Mar. Is this living?—And withall, ſhe has ſuch levity! But a little while ago, ſhe declared ſhe had the moſt important things to intruſt me with, and wanted to aſk my advice; however, this evening ſhe has totally forgotten the *ſorrows* and *vexations* of which ſhe was ſo impatient to give me an account.

Jul. And you have not reminded her?

Mar. I took care not to do that; for, after all, her ſilence is more agreeable to me than her converſation.

Jul. Here ſhe is. She ſeems very full of buſineſs; I will leave you, for now ſhe certainly has ſome ſecret to communicate. [*She goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE VI.

THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS.

Vif. OH, my love! you ſee me in ſuch agitation, ſuch diſtreſs—

Mar. Why, what has happened?

Vif. It was one of my women who wanted to ſpeak with me.

Mar. Well?

Vif. Why, ſhe came to ſay, that my mother-in-law is in a dreadful rage. She has heard the whole ſtory about the Baroneſs, with whoſe relations ſhe lives in intimacy; and this loſs at play, which is attributed to my advice, has diſpoſed her to give me the fineſt lecture!—Only think, ſhe has ſeated herſelf in my room, and waits there in order to preach to me—Aye, ſhe ſhall wait long enough, for I am determined to ſpend the night here.

Mar. What nonſenſe!

Vif. Would you have me go and expoſe myſelf to ſuch a ſcene after ſupper, with my ſhocking nerves, and exquiſite ſenſibility?—No, that's impoſſible. I ſhall ſtay here till to-morrow morning—we will chat.—I have ſo many things to tell you!—You cannot imagine how exceſſively I am to be pitied for my feelings.—You often ſee me in my penſive hours: this unevenneſs is very inexcuſable; and all the philoſophy in the world is not always ſufficient to overcome diſtreſſes which affect ſo acutely.

Mar. However, your reſolution in concealing them ſo well is much to be admired.

Vif. Indeed, I have ſome reſolution—if I had not *character*, *energy*, what would become of me?—Judge of my ſituation, I'll deſcribe it in two words: I have a huſband, who complains of me and continually contradicts me; a father, and mother-in-law, who cannot bear me, and with them I am obliged to aſſociate, becauſe I live in their houſe; I have a hundred enemies, by whom I am blackened and calumniated, and, excepting yourſelf, I have not a ſingle friend.

Mar. Your ſituation is dreadful; but what attempts have you made towards mending it?

Vif. I try to diſſipate myſelf; I never ſtay at home, but am continually running from place to place, in queſt of people I care nothing about, and who conſider me with perfect indifference, that I may avoid my family, by whom I am hated and tormented.

Mar. But you cannot always eſcape from your family; you muſt ſometimes be at home; nor can any thing ſhake off a huſband's authority. Would it not be wiſer if you endeavoured to gain the affection of thoſe on whom you depend, inſtead of defying, irritating, and perhaps driving them to violent extremities?

Vif. But there is no pleaſing them, without almoſt intirely renouncing the world, ſtaying at home part of the day, ſupping there frequently, never contracting debts, nor playing at pharaoh.

Mar. (*Laughing.*) Theſe injunctions are very ſevere and tyrannical indeed!

Vif. You rally—I can readily ſuppoſe ſuch injunctions would not be tyrannical to you; and that you, who are reaſon itſelf, could ſubmit to them without

without reluctance. But I have not had the advantage you enjoy, that of receiving an excellent education, which has given you a thouſand accompliſhments. You know how to employ yourſelf, and can ſtay at home without experiencing *ennui*: you had a moſt judicious guide to direct your firſt ſteps in the world; you have received uſeful advice, which ought to form your mind and underſtanding: therefore, for you to poſſeſs method, judgment, and invariable principles, is not aſtoniſhing. If you were not, as you are, a pattern of conduct and wiſdom, you muſt, by nature, have been either fooliſh, or mad. So do not be too proud of all your perfections, my dear friend, ſince you owe moſt of them to the kind attention of a worthy aunt.

Mar. (*Aſide.*) Alas! how ſevere and juſt a cenſure ſhe paſſes upon me without deſigning it!

Viſ. For my part, I was placed in a convent from my infancy, and only taken out to be married: you are ſedate, I am thoughtleſs; this follows of courſe.—I gave myſelf up to the faſhion I found eſtabliſhed in the world; and, not having any reſource within myſelf, I ſought it in a diſſipation which could alone deliver me from *ennui*.

Mar. But you are ſo young, that you may yet acquire knowledge and accompliſhments.

Viſ. I wiſh it. I do what I can —I am going through a courſe of natural philoſophy; I have got a billiard-maſter; I ride in *the manége*, and learn to drive ponies; but notwithſtanding all this, when I am alone in my cloſet, I ſtill find myſelf equally deſtitute of employment; nor do

theſe things make retirement at all more pleaſing to me.

Mar. I believe it firmly; the kind of ſtudies which you have choſen can be no great reſource in ſolitude.

Vif. However, this kind of ſtudy is very much *the ton*, and every woman now gives herſelf up to it.

Mar. Let us leave violent exerciſes, and the ſciences to men; they have not our graces, we have not their ſtrength. They are made for great things; boldneſs, temerity, and enthuſiaſm, become them; moderation, prudence, and ſoftneſs, are our portion. By endeavouring to reſemble us, they would debaſe themſelves; and we, by wiſhing to imitate them, renounce all our charms, and loſe the ſureſt means of captivating.

Vif. So, my love, you condemn a woman, who plays at billiards, hunts, and goes through courſes of the ſciences.

Mar. I am of opinion, that in every thing, exceſs alone is to be condemned. A woman who, devoted her whole life to thoſe employments of which you are ſpeaking, and who cultivated no other talent, would, I confeſs, appear to me much to be pitied; for, in ſhort, at forty we can neither follow the hounds nor drive ponies.

Vif. I never thought of what I ſhould do at forty.—Now you have given me the idea, I muſt conſider about it.—I ſhall feel quite ſhocked at being forty, I foreſee that.—You ſpeak like an angel, my love; you have convinced me; and I'll leave off riding on horſeback—beſides, it gives me ſuch a painful wearineſs—But I hear Juliet.—What does ſhe want with us?

SCENE

SCENE VII.

THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS, JULIET *with two domino's, and maſks in her hand.*

Jul. to the Vif. MADAM, here are the maſquerade-dreſſes you wanted.

Mar. How, maſquerade-dreſſes!

Vif. Yes; there is a maſquerade-ball at the opera-houſe to night.

Mar. Well, what then?

Vif. What then? why let us go to it, my love.

Mar. Not I, believe me.

Vif. Only hear. I poſitively will not return home before five in the morning; ſo what would you have us do till that time, for now it is only one o'clock?

Mar. You may do what you pleaſe; but I am juſt going to bed, I aſſure you.

Vif. Pho, pho, I am uſed to this, 'tis your way; you always begin by refuſing.

Mar. You ſhall never again reproach me with that weakneſs, for I promiſe you hereafter to perſiſt in my oppoſition.

Vif. With all my heart, but now it would be too cruel; for you know I cannot go home.

Mar. Well, I offer you a bed.

Vif. I go to bed!—I ſleep in ſuch an agitation!

Mar. You would make me believe you can have no reſt, but at the maſquerade.

Vif. It will, at leaſt, diverſify my ideas, and I am in great need of that.

Jul. (*Aſide.*) How affecting this is!

Vif. I'll make Juliet my judge.—Obſerve, dear Juliet, I have a reaſon—a very powerful reaſon, which prevents my going home.

Jul. I know it, madam.

Vif. How?

Jul. Your woman, mademoiſelle Henrietta, whom I never ſaw but once before to-night, has given me a minute detail of all ſhe had the honour of telling you; and as ſhe did not enjoin me to ſecrecy, I am at liberty, madam, to warn you againſt relying too much on her diſcretion.

Vif. But where can one find a diſcreet lady's woman? this is the ſixth, whom I have made my confident; I have already diſcharged five, and cannot mend myſelf.—In ſhort, Juliet, you ſee it will be much better for us to go to the maſquerade-ball, than wait here for day, and be tired to death.—Come, dreſs your lady.

Mar. This is a uſeleſs perſecution.

Jul. (*Speaking low to the Marchioneſs.*) You can only get rid of her by theſe means madam.

Mar. (*Speaking low to Juliet.*) How inſupportable!

Vif. I declare I have no more inclination for the maſquerade, than you have.

Mar. Oh, reaſon prompts you to make the effort; this is heroic indeed!—Come then, I am ready to accompany you thither.

Vif. (*With extaſy.*) Charming creature! my dear, how I love you!—

Mar. But on this condition, that if you meet with any lady of your acquaintance, I may be at liberty to leave you with her, and go away.

Vif. Agreed—I willingly acquieſce in that; 'tis quite fair.—Come, let us dreſs.

Jul. (*To the Viſcounteſs.*) Madam, will you put on your dreſs?

Viſ. Willingly.—(*She dreſſes herſelf.*) We ſhall have ſome excellent figures at the maſquerade.

Mar. (*Aſide.*) What folly!—What inconſiſtency!—But her education, in ſome meaſure, pleads her excuſe.—She is only to be pitied.

Jul. (*To the Marchioneſs.*) Now, madam, I'll dreſs you. [*She dreſſes the Marchioneſs.*

Viſ. I was told the ball would be ſuperb to-night. I think I ſhall be quite killing.—Where are our maſks?—Oh, here.—I'll take this.—Make haſte, my life.—Ah, now you look moſt charmingly!—What a comical habit!—'Tis pretty to be in maſquerade.—And the head-dreſs?

Jul. There it is.

Mar. Let us put on our maſks firſt. (*She puts on her maſk.*)

Viſ. Make haſte, dear Juliet.—I am dying to go.—This is juſt the hour when the ball is delightful.—Come, come; be quick. (*She puts on her maſk.*)

Mar. I hear ſomebody.—Juliet, ſee who it is.

Jul. Oh, madam!—

Mar. What's the matter?

Jul. I think I hear madame Doriza's voice.

Mar. Good heaven!

Jul. I am not miſtaken, 'tis ſhe herſelf.

Mar. I tremble!

Viſ. What an unlucky accident!

Jul. (*Aſide.*) What a terrible apparition at this inſtant!

SCENE

SCENE VIII.

DORIZA, THE MARCHIONESS, THE VISCOUNTESS.

(Doriza remains for a moment at the further end of the ſtage, and views the maſkers with ſurprize; the Viſcounteſs and Marchioneſs appear aſtoniſhed and confuſed.)

Dor. (*Advancing.*) I AM ſorry to interrupt your pleaſures, but I muſt poſſitively ſpeak a word with my niece.

Viſ. (*In a low voice to the March.*) Make your eſcape, my love.—I'll ſtay, I'll ſtand the brunt in your place; I willingly ſacrifice myſelf——

Mar. (*In a low voice to the Viſ.*) No, do you go, I conjure you.

Viſ. (*Still ſpeaking low.*) I cannot leave you.

Dor. I now am unaccuſtomed to maſquerades—and you are too well diſguiſed for me to know you.—Niece, will you anſwer me?

Viſ. (*Approaches, and ſpeaks in a ſqueaking voice.*) My dear aunt, forgive me this little maſquerade.

Mar. (*Unmaſking.*) Aunt, I am driven to deſpair!

Viſ. (*Speaking low to the March.*) It is I, then, who muſt take to flight.—Adieu, my love. I am inconſolable for what has happened. The aunts and mothers-in-law have, this day, conſpired againſt me; I am going to deliver myſelf up to mine, as a puniſhment for the diſtreſs I bring upon you.—Farewell. [*She goes out.*

SCENE

SCENE IX. And laſt.

DORIZA, THE MARCHIONESS, JULIET.

Juliet, *offers to retire.*

Dor. STAY Juliet; you have written to me, and I owe you an anſwer; nor will I keep you any longer in ſuſpenſe.

Jul. Ah, madam! I venture to gueſs your anſwer.

Dor. (*To the Marchioneſs.*) Niece, lay aſide that embarraſſed air; look at me, you will not perceive any trace of diſſatisfaction on my countenance. I might complain of you with juſtice, but you appear too ſenſibly affected by your fault, for me to have the power of reproaching you with it.

Mar. You ſee me penetrated with regret and confuſion, madam; and your exceſſive indulgence renders me ſtill more blameable.—I do not preſume to relate the reaſons which might, in ſome meaſure, exculpate me; but deign to aſk Juliet how I have been hurried on, and what repugnance I felt.—

Dor. Without knowing your reaſons, or being able to believe them good ones, I ſuppoſe, ſince you have broken your word with me, that it muſt have coſt you very dear.

Mar. I deceived you; but how much am I puniſhed for it!—Ah, could you but read my heart!—

Dor. You have afflicted me: you have told me a lie; but you have not deceived me: and this

afternoon, while you were relating your ſtory, I enjoyed one pleaſure, that of being convinced by your bluſhes and awkwardneſs of manner, that it was, at leaſt, the firſt time of your uttering an untruth. As I am more experienced than you are, I ſhould not have been duped, had you poſſeſſed a larger ſhare of art, and that, I am ſenſible, I never could have forgotten. Many circumſtances may induce us to pardon an act of levity, or a want of reſpect; but nothing can render falſehood excuſable, even for a ſingle moment. However, ceaſe, my child, to reproach yourſelf with an offence which I forgive, and will not mention again. I came hither to-night, and would take no denial, but it was not for the ſake of this explanation: it was to bring you good news which I have juſt received.

Mar. Good news!—What—is M. de Germini on the road?—Will he ſoon arrive?

Dor. You have gueſſed it.—This is what I wanted to acquaint you with.

Mar. (*Aſide.*) Oh, heaven!—(*Aloud.*) Soon—in how many days?

Dor. He wiſhed to ſurprize,—but I thought it neceſſary to forewarn you.—He has written to me—he comes this very night, and will be here in an hour—

Jul. She turns pale—ſhe totters.—Ah, madam!—(*Doriza and Juliet ſupport the Marchioneſs.*)

Mar. He comes in an hour!—

Dor. Why this alarm?—What can you fear? Have you not a mother, a friend?—Have you nothing to tell her?—Is it impoſſible for me to obtain a moment's confidence?—Ah! though you refuſe me that, how can you do otherwiſe than ſuppoſe that my heart muſt gueſs your afflictions?

Will

Will you not ſpeak, my child?—Is this the reward you have reſerved for ſo much tenderneſs?

Mar. What a time do you chooſe to demand that confidence to which you have ſo many claims?—You are every thing to me.—I love you as I ought to love you; I cannot better deſcribe the exceſs of an attachament ſo tender!—Were I only to confeſs my faults, my heart ſhould be opened to you, doubt it not.—Were you only my friend, you ſhould know all my ſecrets.—But my benefactreſs!—to abuſe your goodneſs, your generoſity—no, I cannot—

Dor. Since you will not ſpeak, I muſt anticipate you.—Thanks to Juliet's care, it is in my power: though I am ſorry to be obliged to her only, for the happineſs of doing you a ſervice.

Mar. What is it I hear? Oh, heaven!

Jul. Yes, madam, I acknowledge that I betrayed you: your debts amounted to near three thouſand pounds.

Mar. Alas! is it poſſible?

Dor. They are paid.

Mar. Oh, my dear aunt!—

Jul. (Kiſſing her hand.) Permit me, madam.

Mar. How can my gratitude equal ſo much kindneſs? and how can I ever atone for all my faults?—But, my dear aunt, it wrings my very ſoul to think that ſuch generoſity muſt injure your fortune, and that my follies coſt you the greateſt ſacrifices.

Dor. No, my dear child; diſpel your fears; I had that ſum at my command; and could I uſe it in a manner more pleaſing to myſelf? Such are the fruits of economy; it enables us to render eſſential ſervice to thoſe we love: and is there any whim

whim whatſoever, from the indulgence of which we can expect a gratification, equal to this inexpreſſible happineſs?

Mar. You ſave my honour in the eyes of the world, but with what remorſe you at the ſame time overwhelm me! Never, till this moment, did I ſo ſtrongly feel the culpable extravagance of my conduct! When you do every thing for me, I, by an inconceivable fatality, am perhaps, only the more to be pitied.—Can you ſtill love me? may I flatter myſelf with having loſt none of my influence over your heart, after making ſo bad a uſe of it?—Can you, hereafter, eſteem me, and believe my promiſes?—Ah, deign, for pity's ſake, if poſſible, to reconcile me to myſelf!

Dor. Be calm, my dear, be calm; nor think me capable of feeling any apprehenſions reſpecting your future conduct; the penitence you ſhew would have deſtroyed ſuch an idea, had I conceived it. That you have erred, is certain; but I ought to attribute the greateſt part of your errours to myſelf.

Mar. To yourſelf! Oh, no!

Dor. Yes, indeed: I gave you good advice, but at the ſame time repreſented, in too general terms, the dangers of the world. Had I clearly ſhewn you all thoſe dangers, your mind and underſtanding would certainly have enabled you to avoid them. You now have learned from experience, a painful leſſon which I might have ſpared you. However, all is rectified; therefore, let us forget our ſufferings and vexations, nor think of any thing but the happineſs which awaits us.

Mar. Happineſs! yes, at length you have ſhewn it me: happineſs is found in the boſom of our families, in the diſcharge of our duties. Virtue, and

and the moſt pleaſing, the moſt natural ſentiments, lead to, and obtain it; vanity and affected manners keep it at a diſtance: in ſhort, it is only the portion of a pure heart and a ſound judgement.

Dor. (*Embracing her.*) It muſt, it will be yours, I am certain. But come, my dear, let us go and meet M. de Germini; come.

Mar. I am going then to ſee him again, and nothing will diſturb my joy. Oh, my dear aunt!—Juliet, come with us. I wiſh to taſte the pleaſure of being at the ſame moment reunited to all I love!—

Jul. You muſt read my heart, madam; and there ſee the exceſs of my happineſs and gratitude.

Dor. Let us loſe no more time. Come, Juliet; come my dear daughter. [*She takes hold on her arm.* (*The Marchioneſs gives her other arm to Juliet.*)

Mar. (*As ſhe goes out.*) Ah, now indeed, I am happy!

END of the FIRST VOLUME.